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THE

ORIENTAL ANNUAL;

CONTAINING A SERIES OF

Tales, Legends, & Historical Romances;

BY

THOMAS BACON, Esq., F.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "FIRST IMPRESSIONS, AND STUDIES FROM NATURE IN HINDOSTAN," ETC. ETC.

WITH

ENGRAVINGS BY W. AND E. FINDEN,

FROM

SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR.

JJ-J-4

BOMBAY BRA... JACKSON MEMORIAL COLLECTION ORIENTAL ...

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETOR, BY

CHARLES TILT, FLEET STREET.

1839.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE favour with which the preceding volumes of the ORIENTAL ANNUAL have been received has induced the proprietors to spare no expense to render it still more worthy of public approbation. In the present volume an attempt has been made, by combining the efforts of several of the most distinguished artists of the day, to give greater variety to the illustrations than was attainable by the employment of a single pencil. It is unnecessary to do more than allude to the beauty of the drawings finished by Clarkson Stanfield, R. A., David Roberts, T. Creswick, T. C. Dibdin, &c. &c., from the orginal sketches of the Author, or to the admirable manner in which they have been engraved under the skilful superintendence of Messrs. William and Edward Finden.

With the same view to variety, the literary portion of the work has been entrusted to Thomas Bacon, Esq., F.S.A., whose delightful volumes, entitled "First Impressions and Studies from Nature in Hindostan," with all their freshness of remark and buoyancy of feeling, received such warm commendation from the best judges in the literary world.

Fleet Street, Sept. 8, 1838.

ADDRESS.

THROUGH successive brilliant periods of literature and intellectual discernment, during which scarce a line of human character may have been left untraced, or the most latent motives to action unpenetrated by the keen glance of refined judgment and critical scrutiny, the Author who for the first time enters upon the field of letters—while in very truth he dashes forward with headlong zeal, bold and elate, because blind to his peril—has been permitted to shelter his forces under the breastworks of inexperience, diffidence of his strength, and distrust as to the quality or the sufficiency of his stores; and his position has remained unchallenged. Johnson has said, and we readily admit, that "the difficulty of the first

address on any new occasion is felt by every man in his transactions with the world:" but the author of the following pages, who is not altogether untried, ventures to submit that even greater difficulties than these press upon the man who, having been once in action, has a true estimation of the dangers to which he is exposed while he is deliberately advancing upon the batteries of public opinion. How frequently do we see impassioned Hope spring fearlessly onward upon ground where cautious Experience treads with a trembling foot.

It especially belongs to the present era of literature to be adorned with men who, overstepping the narrow limits of mere scholastic lore, read the history and the laws of nature from her own most ample and instructive page. In times of old, when the investigation of truth was, to all ordinary capacities, barred by the stern dogmas of the learned, planted as centinels in the very porch of knowledge, the projectors themselves were ranging throughout the labyrinths of fancy to the extreme boundaries of possibility, gathering the wild flowers of imagination, and delighting to lose

themselves in the intricate and luxuriant forests of poetic illusion; but modern philosophy has taught modern readers to use reason as a clue by which they may safely pass the mysterious enclosures of deceitful theory, and traverse the broad fields of inquiry. It may not be denied that the ancients were capable of elevating the human intellect by the sublime imagery of their poetry, and of exciting it to action by the fire of their eloquence, but the advance of knowledge has placed in the hands of the present generation the touchstone of truth, and the nice test of critical perception, by which every writer must expect to be tried, and which he finds almost as formidable as the grim janitors above described. The young author, however, may find some encouragement in the words of an eminent writer,* who has said, that "he who is penetrating and ardent in the conduct of life will probably exert a proportional force and ingenuity in the exercise of literary talents." And thus, whoever has already gained the credit of the former, may, by perseverance, hope to

* Adams Ferguson, in his Essay on Civil Society.

attain a measure of the latter, even though he may be conscious of possessing neither great vigour of intellect nor grandeur of genius.

The ability with which the foregoing volumes of the ORIENTAL ANNUAL have been conducted, and the popularity of the gentlemen who jointly laboured to produce them, forbid success to the present volume should it fall short of its predecessors in art or general interest; and this consideration had *well nigh* induced the Author to decline the undertaking. Animated, however, by finding the most distinguished artists of the day ready to correct the errors of his pencil, and hoping that he might secure the indulgence of his readers by frankly acknowledging his diffidence as to his literary capacity for such a work, he ventured to think again before he *quite* declined it. The question, still undecided, occupied the Author's meditations, as he turned to consult D'Israeli's Curiosities of Literature, with a determination to weigh dispassionately all which is therein so persuasively urged against the practices of "Authors of moderate capacity." There

however, in a single passage of "The Good Advice of an old Literary Sinner," he found matter sufficient for a decision in accordance with his own wishes, though at variance with the argument. Even so keen a critic as Gilles Menage is represented as having found pleasure in the miserable productions of the Abbé de Marolles, purely for the sake of their *embellishments*, and the *singular neatness of their bindings*. By virtue of these extrinsic advantages then, if a superior merit be denied, the Author admits a hope that he may still reap some favor.

Natural historians have said that birds, and other animals which prey upon the insect tribes, may be observed to select and pursue the most splendid of their victims in preference to the less beautiful. All who have travelled in the Himála Mountains must have remarked with admiration the brilliant array of colours exhibited by the *Leaf-butterfly*, when on the wing; and possibly have watched, with suspended breath, its dazzling flight from tree to tree, and from rock to rock, as it has flitted on in zig-zag course, striving to elude the pursuit of its insatiate enemy, the Fly-catcher; until, at last,

perchance when quite exhausted, it has suddenly vanished among the dried branches of a leafless tree, and the bewildered bird, as if by magic art, is, in a second, cheated of his prey, while he darts his searching glance from side to side, unmindful of a certain *decayed leaf* which, in his hot pursuit, he has apparently brushed from the bough, and which falls to the earth unnoticed among those already scattered there. A word or two will explain. Nature, who has greatly multiplied the perils of this little insect's life by so superbly decking it with crimson and purple and green and gold, in gorgeous combination, most fascinating to the Fly-catcher, has not neglected to provide it with means of escape the most subtle and the most admirable. The under surface of the wing is so exquisitely pencilled in imitation of a dead leaf, that not even the closest ocular scrutiny can detect the fraud; and no less care and design are displayed in the structure of the body, which as nicely resembles a small stem or twig, to which the leaf is attached. Thus, when closely pursued, the Leaf-butterfly will seldom fail of escape by closing its wings and taking advantage of this deception.

Now the Author is sensible that in his flight he can avail himself of no such manœuvre. His gayest plumage is upon the surface, and should his wings, when expanded, prove, in public estimation, no better than a dead leaf, alas! his adventitious ornaments will but the more certainly attract notice, and bring down the merited persecutions of the critic.

P. S.—By way of introduction to this new series of the Oriental Annual, it was at first intended to devote a volume exclusively to the illustration of the many picturesque and romantic islands, and to the sublime coast-scenery which delight the eye and the curiosity of the voyager to India. This, indeed, would have furnished material for a book of a most novel and useful kind; many places of exceeding interest remaining to this day unknown, except as chance may have rendered them notable in history, or by literary description of a very vague sort, such as may be found in a gazetteer. But though novelty and utility were in favour of this design, the Author could not but feel that he should be losing his footing upon the proper

soil of the work by displacing those peculiar characteristics, the preservation of which must be the chief aim and the essential merit of his task. It was, therefore, determined that, in each successive volume, only one or two such subjects should be admitted; the rest, as heretofore, being of a strictly Oriental character. He had good reason to congratulate himself upon this decision, when he found his province suddenly invaded by the spirit of his defunct predecessor, which, though lately risen from "the vasty deep," wears a garb and semblance so life-like, that it might possibly have imposed upon the confidence of the faithful readers of the Oriental Annual, and have usurped possessions which are the indisputable right of the proprietors of this Volume.

T. B.

Bath, August 29, 1838.

ENGRAVINGS

FROM

Drawings by the most eminent Artists,

AFTER

SKETCHES BY THOMAS BACON, ESQ., F.S.A.

SUBJECT.	ENGRAVER.	PAINTER.
THE MOTI MUSJID *(frontispiece)* . .	W. FINDEN . .	D. ROBERTS.
TEMPLE AT KUNKHUL *(vignette)* .	E. FINDEN. .	D. ROBERTS.
TERCEIRA	E. FINDEN . .	H. WARREN.
PEAK TENERIFFE	R. WALLIS .	C. STANFIELD, R.A.
RUINS AT MONEA	E. FINDEN . .	T. C. DIBDIN.
SAMADUT ALI'S PALACE.	E. FINDEN .	T. C. DIBDIN.
MUSJID AT GHAZIPORE	W. FINDEN . .	T. C. DIBDIN.
TEMPLE OF DENESA, BENARES . .	T. JEAVONS .	T. C. DIBDIN.
RUINS AT ETTAIAH	E. FINDEN . .	C. STANFIELD, R.A.
THE FORT OF AGRA	J. H. KERNOT.	C. STANFIELD, R.A.
SHRINE OF MOHUMMED KAHN. . .	E. FINDEN . .	T. C. DIBDIN.
RUINS AT FUTTEHPORE SIKRI . .	W. FINDEN .	D. ROBERTS.
RUINS NEAR BIANA.	E. FINDEN . .	T. CRESWICK.
GHAT AND TEMPLE AT GOKUL . .	R. WALLIS. .	D. ROBERTS.
THE GREAT TEMPLE, HURDWAR . .	W. FINDEN . .	T. C. DIBDIN
TEMPLES OF MAHADEO	E. FINDEN. .	T. C. DIBDIN.
THE GHAT, HURDWAR	J. REDAWAY .	T. C. DIBDIN.
JUMNOUTRI AND THE CONE . . .	J. APPLETON .	T. CRESWICK.

THE

ORIENTAL ANNUAL.

TERCEIRA.

In reviewing certain passages of our past lives, we may all be more or less sensible of the operation of many extraneous agencies which, independently of our predispositions and temper, have exercised a secret influence over the pleasure or the dissatisfaction with which we have regarded any particular scene or incident. Perchance, we know not why, our anticipated raptures have declined into cold admiration or indifference, when viewing the most exquisite scenery; our delight in a favourite study, or a favourite pastime, has flagged, without any obvious cause, when we had fancied ourselves best prepared for its enjoyment; or, under similar auspices *even* the chosen beauties of the poet *may* have failed to shake the leaden slumber from our sympathies. Of these external influences, the state of the heavens and the atmosphere appear to exert the most universal power, and we are sometimes astonished

to discover with how many fictitious attractions the imagination has bedecked those scenes which have been witnessed in bright and smiling weather: especially we perceive this in looking back upon the scenes of our past lives, when the accidental shadows which may have chequered the scene are almost lost in distance, or are made to reflect the bright colours and the sun-lit effect of the rest of the picture. Whether or not sun and sky have the chief merit in conjuring up the brilliant images which crowd upon my memory at the bare mention of the Azores, I will not enquire; nor is it of any importance to the reader to be informed; since the same delight-inspiring agents are at hand, nearly all the year round, to welcome each successive visitor, and to give him the benefit of their attendance. Should it be otherwise, there is little fear that the eastern voyager will be able to denounce me as a flatterer; since, in dull or stormy weather, the cautious skipper will prefer the open ocean to the narrow channels between the islands.

I have never met with any person who could deny that these islands are beautiful; and yet their iron-girt and cinerous cliffs, o'ertopped with rugged mountains, with only here and there a peep at the fertility within, hold out little promise of hospitality to the stranger; more especially when it is discovered that every accessible point is defended by strong batteries perched up

among the rocks. 'Tis true that now and then a pretty town opens to view in the snug shelter of a rounded bay, and glimpses are had of vineyards, orchards, and gardens, which promise good fare and pleasant entertainment; nor, if he tarry, will the stranger find himself deceived; for, within the impregnable coast, the inhabitants are as hospitable as the country is beautiful and fertile. Terceira, being the principal island, has been selected as the subject of this sketch, and the description attempted will give a correct idea of the others, there being a great similarity in their general aspect and productions; except only Pico, which is a monstrous volcanic cone upwards of seven thousand feet high.

I do not think I can better illustrate the scenery, or bring more powerful evidence in support of my foregoing remarks, than by presenting the reader with a few selections from the journal of a friend who passed many months among the islands; and the very enthusiastic and poetical manner in which he apostrophizes them will evince the justice of my eulogiums. He says; "Nature hath never, in capricious mood, called into life a brighter cluster than these foundlings of sun and ocean. Their magic number gives them to the muses, and each would furnish classic realm for a daughter of Mnemosyne. In triplet groups they spring from the deep sea, and, laughing out upon the wide expanse, speak to the

heart in tones so fresh and joyous, so full of life and beauty, that he must be insensible indeed who could pass on his way without a wish to linger.

"Beautiful islands! Many years have passed since, faint in the distance, I first descried the dim blue haze which marked your position; since, more near, I gazed on the bright green hills and valleys, the glittering houses, the spire and dome of church and palace, which greet the wanderer's approach to Terceira; but even now, in dreamy thought, your bright hues and varied outlines rise in soft repose before me.

"Circling round and round with untiring music, how wildly yet gently play the waves, dashing their rainbow spray on every side! while, ever and anon, with

'—— feigned abuse
Such as perplext lovers use,'

or rather with a fond mother's restless love, chafed that she cannot lavish more treasure from the unmeasured depths of her affection, the Atlantic heaves her troubled bosom, while her murmurs are echoed back upon the breeze from the deep caverns of the beetling coast.

"As the vessel slowly beat up, the city and surrounding country became gradually more distinct; the pointed architecture, the pure white walls, and pyramidal red-tiled roofs stood out in sharp relief; and presently the nearest houses showed the painted lattices—carefully closed, to seclude all within from the

sun's rays or the prying eye. At last the entire little city lay before us, stretching down to the crescent bay, bristled with turretted walls and forts. A high embattled castle stands far above the town, and the spires of the cathedral, and gilded roof of the palace, sparkle in the sun beneath. On every side the cross-surmounted convents, the walls, and streets, tower above each other in picturesque confusion, while the lofty range of hills, which form the background, sweep boldly upwards, and gird the city round with a huge bulwark, such as Nature alone can rear or destroy."

There is little or no protection for shipping in the harbour of Angra against the prevailing south-west winds, as we found to our annoyance; for we had scarcely completed the necessary preparation for bringing the vessel to an anchor, before a stiff breeze springing up in that quarter convinced our Captain of the expediency of putting out to sea again. The word "helm's-a-lee" was given a second too late; the ship missed stays, and we found ourselves drifting with a strong current upon the rocky and precipitous foot of *Monte Bresil.* A kedge anchor was let go just in time to save us, and having manned the boats, we lost no time in effecting a landing. Our eager party hurried up the long flight of steps leading from the quay, joyous indeed again to find a steady footing. We wandered through the town, every sense delighted with the novelty and foreign aspect of the place. The closed jalousies, the care-

fully screened balconies, with their little trap-door-like windows, where perchance a glimpse might be caught of some dark-eyed daughter of Eve, inheriting, if not all her parent's beauty, at least her curiosity—the gay costume of the men, their swarthy olive-tinted countenances, bearing little trace of slavery in their expression, and still less in their manly forms or erect and graceful figures—the sombre apparel and shadowy outline of the fairer sex, closely enveloped in the black hood and mantilla of the *Tras as Montes,* passing and repassing with slow and measured step, as if at once to challenge and defy the stranger's curiosity—the jargon of song and salutation in a foreign tongue—the groups of loaded cattle, and the yoked oxen rudely attached to cars of a most primitive construction—and then the peculiar "Iss—st!" subdued, yet quite intelligible, passed from balcony to balcony, or to the loungers in the street below—these, and many other sights and sounds, united to complete a scene so charming in its novelty, that no faculty was left unoccupied.

The scorching sun, now blazing upon our heads with mid-day force, reflected too by the dazzling white of every house, placed us in a cross fire, too hot for long endurance, and compelled us to seek shelter beneath the roof of a British merchant, who hospitably vouchsafes to every Englishman a privilege which he appears to enjoy in every land except old England; that of paying extravagantly and feasting

poorly. After exploring many unsightly passages, we penetrated a steep and dirty alley, and discovered the delectable refuge which we sought—not an hotel —the name would have been resented as an indignity by the inflated host, the proud vendor of all things vendible, from a yard of cloth to a cargo of oranges. In the limited commerce of Terceira, wholesale and retail dealings are usually in the same hands, and thus the meanest shopkeeper, among other immunities, enjoys rank among the trading aristocracy of the land, and, of his own proper right, rejoices in the title of merchant.

Having seen most of the lions in Angra, we were tempted by the beautiful weather and want of occupation to plan an excursion through the interior of the island. The *Villa de Praya*, upon the opposite coast, was selected as our destination, and one of the residents, upon whom we had prevailed to act as our guide, promised us an excellent day's sport. There are two roads from Angra to Praya; the lower one winding round the bold projecting headlands of the coast, the other leading through a varied succession of cultivated and waste lands, direct across the mountains. The latter was preferred, and having braced our nerves against sun and heat, we turned short up the precipitous mountain side which girds in the little capital, and speedily reached the summit, amply rewarded for our pains by the glorious scene around. Turning inland, we lost sight of the ocean, and descended upon

the uncultivated districts. The distance before us was about five leagues, over a road, if such it may be called, formed of lumps of lava, scoriæ, and cinders, in some places wedged together in huge masses, and in others covered with roughly broken fragments, which the islanders had strewed (probably to fill up some impracticable chasm) with an utter contempt of the principles of Macadamization.

After crossing two or three chains of mountains, now dipping low into the narrow valleys, and again breasting the abrupt side of the opposite ridge, we reached an open elevated platform, whence we looked down upon a wide-spread basin, extending from hill to valley, from valley to plain, but girt in on all sides by dark volcanic heights, whose gloomy aspect appeared to lour in frowns upon the rash intruder. The steeps are dotted here and there with a few dark and stunted firs, starting at solitary intervals from the blackened heather, which is every where intersected with broad beds of barren waste, overspread with volcanic matter, piled in cumbrous heaps upon the scorched soil, and exhibiting the most monstrous and fantastic forms, as if but recently cast forth by some terrible convulsion. There they stood in the same wild and gloomy confusion in which they were uplifted from the hidden gulfs below, or showered down upon the plain in the fierce storm and tumult of eruption. Down the rough and blighted sides of the mountains the course of the

consuming lava was distinctly seen, as though the fiery flood had scarcely ceased to welter through its tortuous channels. Over the rocks and lava in the immediate foreground a dank grey moss had spread itself; a noisome vegetation which detracted not from the desolation of the scene—proclaiming, like the whitened locks of age, "here no more shall youth or freshness be!"

The chill melancholy of the scene entered the heart; no sound or movement broke upon the painful stillness, which spoke of death rather than repose. As we toiled onwards scarcely a word was spoken; indeed, from the moment we had first looked down upon this unearthly wilderness, all attempts at conversation had given way to a dropping fire of half-pronounced ejaculations. Before, behind, to the east, and to the west, we were surrounded by these mysterious and awe-inspiring objects, which dispersed every ray of joy and merriment from our party. But the spell which bound us was broken in a second of time; a sudden exclamation of joyous relief burst from each as we successively surmounted the crest of the hill, and beheld expanded before us the bright blue waters of the Atlantic, cheerful with light and life, whose sound and movement were alone sufficient to dispel our gloomy mood.

Words are not for strong emotions, and are seldom voluntarily resorted to; the mind appears instinctively to be sensible of their weakness; they are for

the business of life, and not for the more secret mysteries of our nature, which, while they concentrate and absorb, are too deep and too subtle to be brought at will to the surface, and made tangible. Perhaps the much quoted saying of the late Prince of Diplomatists may be true in a more hidden sense than is displayed in its ordinary acceptation, that the chief, that is the common, use of words is to disguise the thoughts—for how seldom do we find words capable of truly rendering the more refined and abstract reasonings of the mind, the profound emotions of the heart. If then words fail to convey a true reflection of these, they serve but to disguise that which they are intended to portray.

The summit of the farthest range over which our route lay was at last attained, and down its undulating sides, beautiful and gay with verdant slopes and richly flowered hollows, we beheld once more the handiwork and the dwellings of man; far, far below us, in a smiling cultivated valley, lay the pretty little town of Praya, its white houses, out-topped by the sombre monastic piles, stretching to the very edge of the fortified bay. In this snug village, shut out by sea and mountain from all the world, what was our surprise to receive the warm welcome of a resident English physician! The cheerful benevolence of his countenance and his frank demeanour alike belied our first suspicion that some wayward misanthropy had led him to this secluded retreat; but our good

host informed us that he had sought in Praya a peaceful enjoyment of health and of life's blessings, without which, and contentment of heart, there is indeed little joy in our existence; and these elements of happiness he assured us he had discovered even in the absence of all luxury, I had almost said of civilization.

The day after our arrival at Praya had been fixed upon for our sporting excursion; we therefore rose with the dawn, and having partaken of a substantial breakfast, we mustered our forces and set forth, declining the services of a guide, upon the strength of the prowess we had exhibited the previous day. It was agreed that we should direct our steps towards a lake some few miles distant, where we had been assured that woodcocks and snipe were in great abundance, and guerillas and bandits were supposed to be somewhat less numerous, they having been hunted out by the local authorities but a short time before.

Our path first led along giddy precipices, which descend almost perpendicularly, a thousand feet and more, to the beach below. The vast flights of sea birds, now soaring above, now circling midway down the cliffs, determined two of our party to keep the coast; while myself and two others, superior to so unsportsmanlike a temptation, held our original purpose and shaped our course for the interior. We had not proceeded far before we entered a pleasant and fruitful valley irregularly ascending to a high and rocky gorge, down which there dashed a little moun-

tain stream, bounding from point to point, now hid, now bursting out anew from the clustering shrubs, and gliding through the levels, until it disappeared at the other extremity of the vale. The opposite hill, and another valley, partially covered with dense coppice-wood, led us to the foot of a mountain, which rose towering high above, thickly overlaid with brown heath and brush-wood; up this too we held our way, and at last, panting and breathless, gained the summit, from whence a wide view was obtained of the surrounding country. Another valley lay before us, not like the others, warm and cultivated, its flat and barren plain being broken only by a few solitary and dismal-looking ponds, while further on again were more and more mountains. Countless black-birds and a few miserable cattle were the only things of life to be discovered.

An enormous ravine offered us an exit from this scene, without encountering the steeps of the opposite range; but it was a question whether this narrow chasm saved us any toil, for on and on we wandered, from solitude to solitude, without at any time observing the least trace of man or his haunts. The wild beauties of the scenery had delighted us, but we had been sadly deluded of our looked-for sport, and at last, faint and weary, we called a halt, and refreshed ourselves with the contents of an ample provision basket, furnished by our kind host. We speedily discussed the more substantial part of our mid-day meal, and, lighting our cigars, reclined upon the soft grass, while

in imagination we were transported back to the year of our Lord 1439, where history places the discovery of the islands—to that day when first Gonzalo Velho Cabral, the Commendador de Almonral and Senhor of Cardiga, grasping the Portuguese banner, sprung to the shore with the ardent hopes of a discoverer. With what wonder and curiosity must he have wandered with his followers from hill to dale, from dale to open plain, half doubting, yet still expecting to meet a native race, whom to claim as the subjects of his new found empire; and how must he at last have returned to his boats, his delight a little dashed by disappointment, but still enchanted with the beauty of his uncontested prize, its balmy air and fertile soil redolent with perfume, and the sweet sounds of its only inhabitants, the feathered songsters. For here no beast of prey, no poisoned vermin live; the venom of the snake and the virus of the rabid dog alike become inert, under the influence of this benignant clime.

After we had a little refreshed our wearied frames we bethought ourselves of the necessity of again pressing forward, and for hours we continued to pursue the same pathless and laborious course, determined to find any other route back to Praya rather than attempt to retrace our way through the difficulties we had encountered. We had become involved in dense and intricate woods, with only here and there a labyrinthine track leading us on through an undulating country, apparently interminable, and utterly

impervious to the eye beyond a few yards; the broken ground and intercepting roots and branches, the uncertainty of our proper direction, and our dissentient conjectures, only tending to render the toil at every step less and less tolerable. As for the lake of which we came in search, with its abundant woodcocks and snipe, all thought of it had long since given place to an importunate anxiety to find the coast before night closed upon us, or before our bruised limbs should be altogether overpowered by fatigue.

When at last by a persevering advance we broke from the confines of the forest, we found little indeed to cheer our flagging courage. A dreary plain, cut up with endless ravines, opened to a farther prospect of mountains, dark and forbidding as any thing we had yet beheld; shut in on every side, their sharp and ragged outlines scowled a defiance upon our now spiritless and drooping trio. Truly our condition was deplorable, and our outward appearance was by no means calculated to gloss over the reality of our sufferings, or to delude us in our estimation of them. Scarce a remnant of shoe-leather was there among us; and as to our upper garments, the entire stock would not have furnished materials for a complete suit; that which remained was hanging to our persons in tattered strips and shreds, deserving the names by which they are commonly designated about as much as did the patches which we had left adhering to the thickets. Our prospects were not more flattering than our actual

state of person: a dinnerless and houseless night was all we could expect, at best—a bivouac without either honour or glory—with the probability of rising next morning still more stiff and hungry, to say nothing of the chance of not rising at all; for we were not unmindful of what had been said in Praya about the guerrillas and bandits, who being hunted out from the neighbourhood of our looked for lake, we thought could hardly have selected a more impracticable stronghold than the wood from which we had just emerged.

Already the lengthened and purple shadows betokened the close of day. A short halt just to recover breath was all that we could permit; for we were determined to press on, till night should fairly bar our farther progress. Across a forked indenture of the mountains, a level stream of light, stretching like an artificial horizon in the darkening sky, attracted our notice; and fancying that it might prove to be the sea, distant and hopeless as appeared our chance of success, to this we resolved to turn our steps, rather than wander on without any sort of guidance. Again we pushed forward with the last efforts of our strength; again we breasted the knotty steeps. Our high roads were the loose and rugged beds of the mountain torrent; our cross roads were the arduous and thorny passages which we made for ourselves through the tangled brushwood; and our bye-roads lay through the circuitous and zig-zag inequalities of ravines and

gaping clefts, through which we clambered to escape the walled precipices which continually opposed us. At last we were rewarded for our toil, by finding our fancied ocean no delusion; a height was gained whence we could fairly view its broad waters; and, upon the plain before it, to our joy we descried a little village, which, though far distant, and quickly fading from our sight in the closing twilight, was at least a promise of eventual escape from hunger and extreme fatigue.

With renewed vigour we quickened our steps, and just as night had completely overspread the island we arrived at our promised shelter. We entered the first cottage; but the utmost hospitality which we could extort from the suspicious and bandit-looking inmates amounted only to a scanty draft of execrably sour wine and a modicum of garlic-flavoured bread; rendered still less palatable by the unwelcome intelligence that we were four leagues from Praya. Four leagues indeed! what a blank each face presented! We knew not whether our present position was any amelioration of the melancholy bivouac which we had anticipated on the borders of the forest. We had speedily become the centre of a group of the most wild and lawless-looking gentry it has ever been my fortune to behold, the objects of a most unpleasant and unceremonious scrutiny, of certain monosyllables and significant gestures, having especial reference to our guns, which convinced us that, however weary, it would be prudent to

lose no time in parting with such company. There was a wistful look in their hang-dog faces, an occasional murmur about *Ingleses, dinheiro,* &c., which rendered our council of war wonderfully unanimous in the determination of beating a retreat. Eager directions were given us as to the exact route we were to pursue; it might be in charity—but we did not think so. Men when they are very hungry and very tired are never very philanthropic.

The night was unusually dark, and even had we been inclined to keep the road pointed out to us, we probably should not have been able to do so; but we thought any other preferable, and staggered on, almost heedless of our course. After many hours of painful wandering we saw lights in the distance, and found that we had providentially taken a pretty direct route to Praya; we entered the town a little after midnight.

When we presented ourselves before our host we were dismayed to find only one of our comrades whom we had left upon the coast; he enquired eagerly if we had brought news of his lost companion; who, followed by his dog, had descended the cliff, promising to skirt the shore, but whom we had not again seen. Until nightfall our friend had fatigued himself with fruitless search; his call was unreturned, save by a melancholy echo from the rocks below. Our arrival relieved both our friends from much anxiety on our own account, but it destroyed their hope that he who was missing had fallen

in with and accompanied us. Harrassed and toil-worn as we were, it was impossible to rest while uncertain of his fate; we in a measure restored our strength by a hasty but plentiful refreshment; and then, despite our lacerated feet and stiffened limbs, we again sallied forth.

We despatched two fishermen round by the beach, and, provided with a guide, we followed the path which we had taken in the morning: we soon came to the place where we had separated, and thence pursued as nearly as possible that which our absent friend had chosen; sounding every now and then a blast from a horn in order to signify our advance, and if possible to direct the wanderer to his friends: but we listened in vain for his reply to our challenge. The only answer was the echo, mocking our alarm, as the faint and solemn tones reverberated from cliff to cliff, and the ill-omened screech of the disturbed sea-birds, with the feeble moaning of the wind and sea. Again we blew a louder and still louder blast—a strange foreboding thrilled through me—all was dark and drear, but I fancied that the faint and piteous howl of a dog was borne upon the breeze which repeated the notes of the horn. Yes, it was Ranger's voice, now more loudly and clearly heard. Onward we pressed in the direction from which the sound had come; but as we advanced the cry of the dog was lost, for the gathering winds rising swept down from the hills in hollow gusts and then more loudly whistled in our ears, while the

roar of the sea added to the confusion of sounds. Again and again we blew the horn, but without avail.

We had not advanced many steps, when the foremost of the party stopped suddenly, uttering a low and hurried exclamation. The night was star-lit, and looking before us, we beheld the loosened soil, some feet in extent evidently having been recently upturned. The dew stood upon my brow; all seemed to feel a horror at the sight, a dread that could not shape itself in words. A long and swelling howl from the dog was now repeated in a momentary lull of the wind.

"Mark the spot! but let us on to the cliff now!"

The first streak of dawn was glimmering in the east as we reached the summit of the rocks; and as day broke, we were hailed by the fishermen whom we had sent round upon the shore. They were half way down the cliff, and with emphatic gesture they pointed down below them; and one of them, resting his head upon his hand, seemed to intimate that our friend lay there asleep or helpless. Our guide was a powerful and active man, and he at once prepared to descend; myself and another of the party followed, after many warnings from the guide, for the steep was one which even the practised islanders considered it a feat to descend; at the best it was extremely hazardous, requiring a cool head and a sure foot, as well as activity and experience. Having disencumbered ourselves of our boots and the most inconvenient part of

our apparel, we cautiously commenced our descent, a Portugue leading the way. It was evident that a single false step must end in a headlong fall of at least a thousand feet.

The excitement of so long a period, with little sustenance and without rest, had rendered me insensible to fatigue, but had produced the false strength and mad determination of fever. Upheld by this supernatural strength, I followed the steps of the crouching guide and my more cautious companion, until about half way down, the former found it impossible to proceed. We reconnoitred the place, and found our farther progress barred by a narrow projecting shelf of rock, which overhung a vast and giddy chasm, black and interminable as seen in the dubious morning light. A few feet below, however, we discovered a second ledge of the same description, but affording a very precarious footing. We lowered ourselves over the abyss, clinging with outstretched arms to the edge, and letting the body slide gently down the scarped face of the precipice. From thence, grappling the scanty knots and rents of the rock with apprehensive energy, we descended to the beach, passing from point to point, and sliding down the narrow water tracks.

Turning a sudden angle as the beach was gained, we were appalled by beholding the mangled and blood-stained corpse of our ill-fated comrade; he lay stretched upon his back, cold and stiffened, his limbs

crushed, his features obliterated, the rocks around clotted with gore. By the side of our poor friend watched the fond and faithful Ranger, bemoaning with piteous lamentation his master's disastrous fate, refusing all attention, and disregarding our efforts to withdraw him from the body.

What had befallen our unfortunate companion before his headlong course down that fearful precipice we never learned, and for the grave-like appearance of the ground which had attracted our notice on our route no better information ever reached me.

TENERIFFE.

It has been freely remarked of travellers in general, and perhaps not altogether without reason, "that they have a common usage of extolling each successive object of their description as the most wonderful, or the most beautiful, or the most curious of all that is wonderful, or beautiful, or curious, within their knowledge."* The author, in reviewing his own admiration and excitement when for the first time he came in sight of the Peak Teneriffe, is willing to risk a similar imputation, rather than qualify his superlatives while attempting to depict the scene. In the whole northern hemisphere there is perhaps scarcely any natural object of curiosity which can be discovered to the traveller with more striking effect than this singular island, upon whichever side and under whatever circumstances it may be approached. There is something so grand, so almost supernatural, in the appearance of the wild volcanic mountain, towering

* Hugh Boyd's Tracts.

aloft in stupendous majesty above the regions of the clouds, from the deep deep waters of the ocean, that the beholder cannot but regard it with sensations akin to awe; nor will his admiration lose one tittle of its solemnity upon a closer view of the ragged cliffs, which are composed of calcined rocks and lava, torn and distorted into countless irregular and mysterious forms.

The mountain is computed by M. de Humboldt to be 12,198 English feet in height, and to be generally visible at sea from a distance of 130 miles; but we have the authority of most voyagers for stating, that at certain seasons the peak is to be seen at the almost incredible distance of 200 miles. This, however, is during those months when the atmosphere is pretty fully charged with moisture, so that the refraction renders it visible at a very much greater distance than would appear possible by calculation from its height. In the dry sunny months of July and August, when seldom even a silver wreath of cloud is seen to stray across the clear canopy of heaven, or more than a gentle breath of air to ripple the bright surface of the ocean, the peak, when first descried, assumes a very singular appearance.

Perchance the far-sighted mariner has discovered it, while to the unpractised landsman there is still *nil nisi pontus et aër*, until the vessel stealing softly onward under the almost imperceptible influence of the breeze, has brought it within scope of his comparatively ob-

tuse sight, and he becomes slowly conscious of some shadowy object, now lost, now seen again upon the clear horizon. Soon this vague shape may be traced by a clear outline upon the sky as it gradually assumes a deeper hue, and then appears like a gap or rent in the natural heaven, admitting the eye to penetrate to a second sky. Now as the vessel, hour by hour, holds on her course and diminishes the distance from the mountain, this illusion is dispersed, and the colour is changed from blue to a deep aerial grey, while a sharp streak of glittering light, glancing from its snowy top, plainly defines the form of the peak.

But the circumstances under which Teneriffe is seen in the full force of its grandeur are the reverse of the foregoing description. When the winter months, commencing with November, bring in the dreary season of storm and hurricane, the howling south-east wind drives down successive volumes of black clouds across the desert of Sahara, from the tempestuous summits of the Jebel Kumra mountains; and these accumulate around the peak, like evil spirits under its command, and, whirling round and round, open and close, and rise and fall upon its rugged sides, now exposing, now completely enveloping them, constantly clashing and revolving in strange uncouth contortions which baffle all attempts at description, and can only be compared to the mad orgies of a thousand genii. The hissing lightnings play from cloud to cloud, and the hoarse

thunder bursts in rattling peals, mingling with the rush of the hurricane and the loud roar of the tumultuous sea. All this, it may be fancied, forms a fearful scene, especially to the poor mariners who have harboured in the narrow roadstead of Santa Cruz: the first prognostic of the coming storm is the signal to slip their cables and put instantly to sea.

The island was anciently called the Peak of Teyde, and the inhabitants, who are Spaniards, still retain the name in preference to the more euphoneous one by which it is now known to the whole world. Though so picturesque an object, upon approaching it, the island possesses very little beauty of scenery within its shores, its cultivated spots being intersected with sterile and unsightly patches of volcanic matter, without anything deserving the name of wood, except here and there a cluster of stunted pines, eked out by a few scattered and ill-shapen palm trees, which, far from adorning, rather add to the desolation of the scene. This is more especially the case upon the coast, for, strange to relate, the lava and scoriæ become less abundant on approaching the peak itself, the monstrous chimney of the eternal furnaces raging below, and the soil is more productive; indeed it is in many places highly cultivated, and the gardens and vineyards of the Spaniards exhibit something approximating to civilization. The same, however, cannot be said of the inhabitants, or of their buildings.

Even the principal towns are extremely wretched both in appearance and as dwellings, while it may be safely said that the sites upon which they have been erected are in every respect the worst that could have been chosen.

St. Christoval de Laguna is called the capital of the island, but why this distinction is conferred, it is difficult to say, unless from the circumstance of the governor having a mansion at that place, although he resides at Santa Cruz, which latter is certainly the more important town, both on account of its harbour for shipping, and for its comparative wealth and extent. It has, however, a most desolate and forbidding aspect, being a collection of some hundreds of houses most flimsily constructed, and, from their dazzling whiteness, having the appearance of a paper town, spread along the flat and narrow beach, and overtopped by black furrowed cliffs, without a single leaf of vegetation or a trace of anything green to relieve the eye from the intolerable glitter of the white-wash. Nor does the place possess one single edifice of importance; the churches are tawdry and badly built, as also are the government house and public offices; the jetty is in sad disrepair, and quite insufficient for its purpose, but it is terminated by a well-built and handsome mole, which serves the double purpose of a jetty-head, protecting the harbour from the continual south-east swell, and being, moreover,

surmounted by a powerful and commanding battery for the defence of the town.

Herein is little to invite further description; but it would be quite unpardonable to quit the roadstead without noticing the very picturesque and almost magic effect which this harbour presents upon entering it after night-fall, if the weather be fair. The twinkling lights of the town are almost eclipsed by thousands of ruddy fires blazing in all directions over the sea, to the outer verge of the bank which forms the roadstead, swiftly passing to and fro like swarming fire-flies, spangling the waves with the reflection, and thus multiplying their numbers until the eye is completely dazzled by the sight. To the stranger who is unacquainted with the cause of this singular scene the enigma must remain untold until the vessel is within the bay; and then, among the foremost of the fires, will be occasionally seen a human figure lit up by the red glare, and then another and another, appearing and vanishing in quick succession; until at last the mystery is solved by a still nearer approach; and these phenomena are found to be countless fleets of fishing boats, each of them having on board two men, whose persons appear gigantic and almost demoniac, as they are seen in the broad light of two blazing fires which they carry on board, one in the bow, and another in the stern of the boat. These brilliant lights are for the purpose of alluring the fish from their rocky resting places, and they are then

taken by the fishermen with rod and line. The scene is rendered more completely grotesque by the singular costume and half-clad appearance of the Spaniards, the wild snatches of song that are fitfully borne upon the wind, the uncouth cries of the men, continually hailing one another from boat to boat, accompanied by the harsh screams of the sea birds whirling in all directions overhead, and watching a favourable opportunity to plunder the boats. Add to this the flashing of innumerable oars, now here, now there, glancing over miles of space with the instantaneous speed of electricity; and, to finish the enchantment of the picture, perchance from the impenetrable gloom steals forth, with silent majesty and slow advance, the towering image of a giant ship, her canvass filled and bending to the breeze, while on she glides, like a spirit of air, through the scattered fleet of tiny fishing boats. The whole scene possesses a wild and unearthly effect, little short of magic, such as may not commonly be discovered in nature, and yet, in moderate weather, it may be nightly witnessed in the roadstead of Santa Cruz.

The unfortunate inhabitants, although the subjects of a double despotism, have preserved undiminished the pride and indolence which proverbially characterize the Spaniards. The will of the governor is over the head of every citizen for life or death, the courts of law being governed by his nod; the power of the priesthood is even still more absolute, and the conse-

quence is, that the people are sunk to the very lowest state of depravity. The town swarms with houseless mendicants of both sexes; the aged dying in the streets from utter filthiness and starvation, while the youth are horribly deformed, or afflicted with the most unsightly diseases. Indeed nothing can exceed the deplorable state of these wretched beings, who are only heeded by those in authority when their emaciated and lifeless bodies are actually obstructing the public streets, and corrupting the atmosphere. Their only means of subsistence appear to be in theft, and in this they are said to outrival even the nimble-fingered islanders of the South Seas, no manner of precaution being proof against their ingenuity or their desperation. It would, however, be difficult to determine whether are the more numerous, the more cunning, and the more shameless, the thieves themselves, or their plunderers, the monks; for these latter literally swarm in the streets in the cool of evening, and must be the objects of mingled pity and abhorrence to all foreigners, while they openly practise their impositions, nor blush to prove themselves as abandoned as their dupes.

Escape we then from these obnoxious dens of human infamy and woe. Upon the opposite coast to Santa Cruz; that is, on the north-west side of the island, stands the port of Oratava, which, without examining too closely, we call a pretty town. It rests upon a rounded declivity at the foot of a high conical

mountain, on the precipitous sides of which are here and there a few white houses, stuck up in little niches without any visible means of access, surrounded with small slopes of garden and cultivation. All around the town too are broad fields of corn, plantations, orchards, vineyards, and gardens of fruits and flowers, with abundant streams of water, most refreshing to the scorched eye; here then let it rest; for all beyond is naked rock and barren broken ground, of which it is just possible the reader may be almost weary.

Such is the favoured Oratava, the most highly cultivated spot on the island, and during many years it had worn the same inviting aspect when compared with the other towns of Teneriffe. But fortune has not always smiled upon it, for in the acme of its greatest prosperity it was suddenly reduced to desolation, and in a single night became a howling wilderness. In 1826 it was visited by an earthquake, accompanied by a hurricane of such terrific violence, that not a building was left standing, not a blade of vegetation undestroyed; the little villages around were shaken from their high perches, and washed into the sea by the irresistible torrents which rushed down the mountain sides, carrying before them, not only flocks and herds, but the ill-fated inhabitants themselves.

Earthquakes are not unfrequent in Teneriffe, and in the year 1704 it was visited by one which, in co-operation with a terrible eruption of the volcano, destroyed nearly all its towns and villages; but although the

fires are still active within—as is evident from occasional subterraneous noises and the bursting of hot springs, and at distant intervals, within the memory of the people, the issuing of smoke from the crater—there has been no eruption since that above-mentioned. The people appear to be insensible to anything like apprehension of the recurrence of such a calamity, nor do they seem to stand much in awe of the frequent earthquakes which shake the very foundations of the island. The summit of the great Peak may be gained by a difficult ascent from Oratava; the distance to the crater from the foot is about twelve miles, the road forming a complete zig-zag throughout.

The crater is of an area containing 7,500 square yards, or, at a rough computation, about an acre and a half. Except during the latter end of August and September, the top is capped with snow, from which the sun's rays glance with great brilliancy, adding not a little to its over-towering effect. It would scarcely be credited by those who have never witnessed a similar illusion, that, at Santa Cruz, which is distant from the Peak upwards of thirty miles, it appears so wonderfully near to the eye that one might almost fancy it possible to cast a stone to the summit. The island possesses several other towns and villages, but none which particularly demand notice in these pages.

MONEA.

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

In accordance with the design explained in the address with which this volume opens, we are now under the necessity of setting all our canvass, sky-scrapers and studding sails, in order to make as rapid a passage as possible from Peak Teneriffe to a point about six hundred miles up the winding course of the sacred river Ganges. Should the reader be of opinion that St. Helena, the Cape of Good Hope, the Mauritius, Ceylon, and other equally interesting points in our track would have been convenient and desirable ports, he must be entreated to rest satisfied at present with the go-ashore entertainment already provided, and console himself with the promise of touching and casting anchor in one or more of these harbours next voyage.

A very short sojourn in any foreign country will generally suffice to dissipate that sense of novelty

which for a time is ever present with the traveller, infusing itself into all his ideas and imparting a fanciful and dream-like want of reality even to his actions. Englishmen who visit the East, having previously confined their travels exclusively to their own quarter of the globe, find this effect protracted much beyond its ordinary duration, by the very striking contrast existing between the characteristics of Asia and Europe, both in the climate, scenery, and people; and it is again and again revived, after the outward appearance of the country has become familiar, by the peculiar properties which seem to distinguish the common features of the scene from those of his home. I might extend the remark, with truth, I believe, even to the more subtle operations of nature, the produce of the country, and the works of the natives; for scarcely a day passes without some strange and unexpected quality being discovered in one or other of them. It were needless to particularise; a thousand instances will at once suggest themselves to the mind of the reader, or they may be found in the pages of every book of travels in the East; but the fact will be fully illustrated by the point upon which I am driving.

The rivers, the rippling brooks, and headlong mountain torrents of old England continue for ages to run in their wonted courses, their utmost depredations being an occasional overflowing of their waters, or the temporary shifting of their sands. The records

of remote ages show us that, centuries since, our forefathers were acquainted with the streams of our land, wearing very much the same aspect, and, at least, flowing within the same banks as in our own days. But it is otherwise with the rivers of India. These vagrant waters, from the mighty Ganges to the meanest tributary, are constantly seeking new channels, shifting over the plain from city to city, perseveringly undermining all barriers whether natural or artificial, and compelling the husbandmen and the villagers to retreat before their irresistible invasions. In many parts, the Ganges may be traced to have had its course, but a few years since, distant full twenty miles from its present channel: I have known it make a digression of three or four miles in a single season. This is chiefly attributable to the soft and sandy nature of the soil, the peculiarly abrupt and tortuous windings of the stream, and the very sudden accumulation of the waters at the commencement of the monsoon, suddenly converting the smooth and silent river into a turbulent flood which rolls down from the highlands with terrific force, saps or overleaps all opposition, and fills its former bed, while it devastates the adjacent country and carves out for itself a new channel, or usurps that of some other stream.

It is not many years since the river Sone—so called from the word *sona*, gold—used to pour its broad

waters into the river Ganges under the walls of a small town named Maena; the junction now takes place about four miles lower down at Monea, which, formerly an inland town, now stands upon a projecting tongue of land washed by both rivers. Neither of these places could be recognised by its former inhabitants, so complete is the transformation. The channel of the Sone is very deep and the waters are, during the greater part of the year, too rapid to be safely navigated by small boats; indeed for many weeks after the first fall of the summer rains it is impracticable, except to boats of a peculiar construction. It has its source in the wild and barbarous province of Gundwana, near a place of great sanctity called Omirkantac, which stands upon a curious table-land considerably elevated above the surrounding country. This place is the constant resort of innumerable diseased and deformed Hindoos, who ascribe to its waters the power of effecting all sorts of cures. The Brahmins have attributed to it a still more mysterious property, when the water is administered by their own hands. They affirm that in certain cases of abject poverty—that is, when the last cowries of the dupe have been distributed among them—it will endow those who drink it with the extraordinary faculty of discovering by intuitive knowledge all the secret places of concealed treasure, within a certain distance round about them. This is not a naked assertion on the part of the

priest; they have a thousand very wonderful and indisputable tales to relate in verification of it. Many are doubtless founded upon facts, and among others,

THE STORY OF RUNG BHOWANI,*

a Raja of Kamroop, was gravely told to me by a Hindoo as an authentic instance of the virtue of the sacred water, for both the purposes above described.

In the ancient Hindoo City of Jaurhát, through the centre of which runs the river Dekhor, there formerly lived a wealthy and influential Raja, by name Rung Bhowani, who enjoyed a large *jaghir* in the district of Kamroop, derived from the gods; of whom, also, the family were descended. In his youth, Rung Bhowani had been blessed with a large family of very beautiful children; but as he advanced in years, when the autumn of life was fast withering his strength, he found himself bereft of his sons and daughters, one after the other, the victims of an insidious and unknown disease, which baffled the skill of all the physicians, all the holy men, and the practitioners of astrology and magic. While in the very bloom of youth, they suddenly declined, and, without pain or any obvious cause, languished in mind and body; until, in a very few months, the cold grave closed over their wasted forms. Throughout the province of Kamroop

* Bhowani is the name of the Indian Venus; but in India it is by no means unusual for a man to be called by the name of a female deity, or for a woman to be named after the gods.

the black art is prevalent in a thousand different forms; and, seeing his children drop into the grave from day to day, his prayers to the gods unheeded, his boundless largesses to the Brahmins unrequited, the afflicted Raja had recourse to those dealers in the obscene and detestable rites of Tantra, who boldly declared their knowledge of the evil, and their ability to resist it. The heart-broken prince had long resisted, with religious dread, the secret promptings of his soul to apply to the demoniac professors of the abhorred system, but each of his beloved children had been laid upon the funeral pile, until one only, the youngest and the most beautiful of the daughters, remained to him.

Hope yet lingered in his breast, so long as health continued to flow in the veins of the lovely child; hope strengthened into confidence, as year succeeded year, adding new charms and vigour to Chahni, the rescued treasure of his heart; when, in the opening of her fourteenth year, while the fond father was in treaty with a neighbouring prince for the alliance of their families, the ruddy glow of health faded from the cheek of the intended bride, the fire burnt low within her once resplendent eyes, the vermillion of her lips declined to sickly pallor, and her full rounded form dwindled into a mere shadow of its wonted grace and beauty. The distracted father with a last and frantic hope fled to the accursed disciples of Tantra, in defiance of the gods of his faith, regardless of the

divine origin of his family. He cast himself before these impure altars, in the anguish of his heart, offering his broad lands, his entire wealth, and his aged body for sacrifice, if they would snatch his darling child from destruction.

The fiends received the Raja with yells and screams of triumph and delight, promised him all he sought, provided, only, he would accede to one condition. Unhesitatingly did the eager parent promise all without reserve; but no sooner had the officiating priest declared his meaning, than the hapless Rung Bhowani, covering his face with his hands, turned from the assembled magicians, in silent horror of their hateful laws, and fled for refuge to a neighbouring temple of Krishna. Here he met a very venerable and devout Brahmin, who, surprised to find a person of high rank in such a condition, and warmly compassionating his affliction, by kindness and gentle persuasion, with promises of assistance, wrung from him a full account of his life's misfortunes, and his present woe. The Brahmin, after some moments spent in deep thought, enquired if the Raja were still disposed to sacrifice his wealth for his daughter's restoration, and, being assured of the fact, he then encouraged him to hope.

"Be comforted, my son," said he, "there is certain life for yourself and your child, if you will follow my counsel. Convert all that you have into gold, and, taking it with you as a peace offering, set forth with

your daughter upon a pilgrimage to the source of the sacred river Sone; and, when you arrive at the holy town of Omirkantac, enquire for an aged Brahmin, by name Ramdoorg; relate to him your history as unreservedly as you have told it to me, and in the Dhurma Shastra he shall point out to you the means by which your daughter shall be saved. Tarry not upon the way lest you arrive too late; go speedily, and with as small a retinue as possible. Diligence and contrition alone can expiate your crime in having deserted the true gods. Talk not of remuneration to me; your whole wealth will be needful to your purpose; and by this you may judge of my sincerity."

Rung Bhowani, placing implicit faith in the words of the devout Brahmin, hastened to commence his journey, according to the directions he had received. The fast declining, but still beautiful, Chahni was conveyed in an easy litter during the cool of the night; and the anxious father rode beside the conveyance, absorbed in his grief, and heedless of all except the gentle voice of his child, who, while strength lasted, ceased not to speak in accents of hope and consolation. After a long and weary pilgrimage, during which poor Rung Bhowani's remaining spirits were fast ebbing—for Chahni continued to grow more and more feeble, so that they despaired of reaching their destination while life remained—the little company arrived at the long-looked-for Omirkantac; and without delay the Raja sought the Brahmin Ramdoorg, who, fore-know-

ing his history and misfortunes, at once promised him relief. "Bring hither your daughter," said the venerable man, "cast upon the altar of the offended Krishna all that you possess of worldly wealth, retrace your steps in humility and hard privation, and the child shall be restored ere you have travelled three days journey from Omirkantac. The consecrated waters will not work the cure unless your faith be proved."

'Tis said, that with full hope and confidence, the Raja deposited upon the altar of the god his all of wealth, stripping his person of his robes and jewels, and adopting the scanty garb of the destitute. Chahni, too, gave up her trinkets and her costly garments before she could effectually receive the healing waters from the holy man. Both drank and turned to depart from the sacred city, as they were commanded by the Brahmin. But, alas! the aged father, enfeebled by the long course of affliction and excitement under which he had suffered, found himself, in his poverty, deserted by his followers; no slave was at his beck to raise the litter; no hand to aid him, or assist his child. They two alone remained to one another, equally helpless; yet did not Rung Bhowani despair: having in vain besought the services of the by-standers, he raised his drooping child, and half-supporting, half-carrying her in his arms, with slow and painful steps he withdrew her from the gaze of the multitude, his stifled sighs and prayers unmixed with aught approaching to a murmur.

They had not continued their distressing advance far beyond the suburbs, when, utterly overpowered with fatigue, they were compelled to seek shelter in a miserable deserted hovel by the road side. Here they were fortunately supplied with water and a small quantity of parched grain by a woman, who, commiserating their sufferings, followed them from the town after sunset, and with more humanity than her neighbours endeavoured to sooth and encourage them. The exhausted father and child having in the warmest terms expressed their gratitude, received an assurance that her kindness should be renewed before they departed on their journey the next morning. Relieved and animated by this tender treatment which they so little expected, it was with complete resignation, and something approaching to happiness that they lay themselves down to rest upon the ground, rendered little more inviting by the miserable blanket which the father carried.

Here in soft sleep (a while) they escaped the extreme misery of their condition. The slumbers of the beautiful Chahni, gentle and unbroken, were such as had not visited her couch for many months; but the anxiety and careful solicitude of the Raja rendered his sleep disturbed and restless. Trains of dim and confused images crowded through his mind, assuming now the substantial form of waking thought, and now the misty, strange, disordered semblance of a vision. The miserable hut which covered them

rose from its lowly form and shapeless walls to monstrous caverned domes and vaulted roofs, upreared on rocky pillars from the deep foundations of the earth. Dark and immeasurable chambers were peopled with ghostly forms and gliding spectres, now laughing and gibing, now welcoming the old Raja with kindly smile, and promising good tidings of his darling Chahni, whom he had lost he knew not where. Now he recognised the Brahmin Ramdoorg leading forth his daughter in health and all her former beauty; and now he beheld the accursed Tantras enveloped in flames, a prey to hideous serpents, who, with fiend-like wrath and with voices of thunder, demanded his pure and lovely child.

The earth trembled, and the tottering walls opened, admitting a blinding glare of light, from crackling and devouring flames, in the midst of which, unscathed, the venerable Ramdoorg stood forth, his countenance full of dignity and virtue. "Hence! Rung Bhowani," he exclaimed; "Hence! or you perish." The heat became intolerable, a fearful crash, followed by a shriek which seemed to rend the vaulted roof asunder, awoke the Raja, who starting to his feet found himself enveloped in flames, and beheld his daughter with wild impassioned gesture entreating a stranger to rescue him from the burning hut: at a bound he dashed through the flames and clasped her in his arms. A glance sufficed to tell the entire tale; the thunders roared, the lightnings flashed so vividly that

the sky was continually illuminated, and the wind was raging with fearful violence: their miserable place of refuge had been fired by the electric fluid, and in a very few minutes was consumed.

But what was the delight of the Raja when he beheld his precious child, with renewed strength, able to stand and walk without assistance! He doubted at first the testimony of his senses, and then, notwithstanding his faith in the promises of the holy Ramdoorg, he trembled lest she should relapse into her helpless state of disease and suffering: but no; she momentarily improved in health, and his pious gratitude would not long suffer his doubts to continue. The rain now burst in torrents from the over-charged clouds, and they were obliged to seek shelter in a ruined tomb hard by. Rung Bhowani turned to examine the stranger whom till now he had scarcely noticed: it was the old Brahmin whom he had encountered in the temple of Krishna at Jaurhát; the Raja knelt and received his blessing, esteeming their second rencontre at so great a distance as nothing less than miraculous. The Brahmin enquired the particulars of their journey, and being informed of all, he bestowed upon them a small coin, and departed on his way to the city, whither he was bound on some mission of benevolence.

No sooner had they entered the centre apartment of the dilapidated tomb in which they sought refuge, than Rung Bhowani became sensible of the presence

of hidden treasure concealed within the walls and buried beneath the crumbling pavement. He took prudent measures for possessing himself of these riches, and became again an opulent man, but returned no more to the country of Kamroop. He built himself a noble palace, of which the ruins are still shown at Omirkantac; and bestowed his beautiful daughter Chahni in marriage upon the only son of a neighbouring Raja. Rung Bhowani took the Brahmins of the place into especial favour, but he did not many years survive the fortunate result of his pilgrimage. He, however, had the satisfaction of beholding the young family of his children springing up to succeed him, and earnestly commended the excellent Ramdoorg and his reverend associates to their care and protection.

The district of Bahar is the only fertile tract of country through which the Sone flows; the land is finely wooded and has all the appearance of the highest cultivation. But this last is not the fact, since the natives are perhaps the most slothful race to be found in Hindostan. The soil owes very little to labour; so wonderfully prolific is it, that the farmers have little to do but sow and reap; and yet, owing to their inactive habits and their excessive use of intoxi-

cating drugs, a more miserable and destitute class of men may be rarely seen. The neighbouring districts have no such natural advantages, and for this reason, labour being necessary to their subsistence, they form a striking contrast to the Baharas. Whole miles of country may be passed, upon the western bank of the river, producing nothing better than a few rushes and scanty jungle grass; the true soil, which would probably be found as productive as that of Bahar, being deeply buried under a succession of sand hillocks, blown up from the river-bed. Even the vicinity of Monea, which is laboriously irrigated, would present but a barren aspect were it not for the mango and tamarind groves, which wonderfully enliven the monotony of sand-hills and scattered palms.

Monea has been a town of considerable importance, and all around it are the remains of temples, mosques, and tombs, presenting a singular mixture of the Moslem and Hindoo styles. The principal object of attraction among these is the Mausoleum of Mukdoom Shah, a prince of the family of Oude, which, though in a state of great decay, is a fine specimen of ancient Moslem architecture, and is now used by Mussulmans as a mosque. It forms the middle distance of the annexed plate, from which it is hoped a correct idea of it may be formed. The material is a fine grey stone, very carefully wrought and put together, without any cement in the walls. In the

construction of the dome it is evident that something of the kind has been used, though this is denied by the natives. The carvings are bold and in good taste, but by no means so elaborate, or of such skilful workmanship as the specimens with which similar buildings are adorned in the Doab; nor is the tomb generally remarkable for the same symmetry of design as those around Agra and Delhi. The dome is very peculiar, being ornamented with intersecting lines, having the appearance of a reticulation, which on near inspection are found to be a representation of plantain leaves overlapping one another; the only design of the kind which I ever with met in India. There is one circumstance, however, about the architecture of this building which at once claimed my attention, and is deserving of particular notice; the principal entrance is formed by a noble Gothic arch, coved and supported by a series of small columns diminishing towards the door, representing a perspective effect, such as is common in many of our Gothic cathedrals and abbeys in England. This is the only instance of the kind which I have ever seen or heard of in Bengal, or the whole continent of India; nor have I ever met with any notice of the fact in any disquisition upon the origin of the various styles of architecture of the East, which certainly is not a little to be wondered at; since, although the Egyptian, Moorish, and Hindoo modes may, in the early

ages, have been derived from the same source, each of them occasionally exhibiting traces of the same principles, and even the peculiar ornaments, which belong to the Greek style; still in this case we have evidence of a servile copy, not of the order itself, but of a fanciful deviation from the order; and this an isolated instance. It would be beyond my depth, as much as it would be foreign to the province of this volume, to enter upon a scientific discussion upon this intricate subject, but I could not pass the circumstance without remark.

The ruins in the foreground of the sketch are the remains of a *Serai*, or public place of rest for travellers, evidently of a style very superior to the generality of these buildings. They usually form a quadrangle with a large arched gateway, surmounted with a tower or apartments for the *dewan* (door-keeper), and each of the small arches around the square forms a lodging for the way-farer, which he occupies at his own pleasure rent-free, paying only a trifle to the sweeper. They are usually erected and endowed by religious or humane men of rank and wealth for the accommodation of pilgrims, as a peace offering to the gods; but they seldom rival in magnificence the mosques and tombs. The one in question must have been superior, both in size and decoration, to any thing of the same kind which I have seen entire, many parts of it bearing evidence

of noble proportion and profuse ornament. It was attached to the Mausoleum, and near it there are the remains of a spacious tank or reservoir of water, enclosed with masonry, and approached by handsome flights of shallow steps and surrounded with pillared and domed pavilions after the oriental fashion; but this also has been suffered to fall into decay, and certainly from its neglected state, does not readily suggest the grateful idea of its original purpose; that of ablution.

These already enumerated are the handsomest and most perfect of the ancient reliques at Monea; and there are very many highly grotesque Hindoo buildings and ruined temples scattered in all directions around the town. The most extraordinary of them is a monstrous and ill-shapen image of the gigantic lion Singh devouring an elephant, though it certainly requires the explanation of the guide before the genus of either animal is quite recognizable. The mythological fable here embodied I was unable to ascertain; my expositor, being a devout Mussulman little skilled in the impious lore of pagans, replied to my enquiry—

"Does heaven rain flowers upon the plains of pestilence? think you the Holy Koran wastes words upon these abominations?"

It is probable, however, that the figure is a representation of some part of the endless history of

Krishna, of whom the Veda relates various exploits performed as Nara Singh, half man, half lion. It was under this form that the enraged god, breathing flames, burst from the pillar in the palace of Prince Hirind Kassip, and destroyed that blasphemer; and in the same disguise he devoured all his enemies in Gokul.

GHAZIPORE.

PALACE OF SAHADUT ALI.—ANCIENT MUSJID.

THE names of most places in India have reference to their early history, and form a convenient clue for the investigations of the traveller. Ghazipore signifies the abode of Ghazi; this place having been distinguished as the favourite residence of the celebrated Ishmael Ghazi Khan, a holy Mussulman, and a wise and talented commander, who first subdued the country of Dinagepore to the Mogul power; and whose humanity and impartial justice have gained for him the worship, not only of true Moslems, but even of the Hindoos themselves, who frequently perform long and painful pilgrimages to his tomb at Shoraghat. We may judge of the excellent wisdom of this chief, by the three fundamental laws which he issued, for the constraint of the farmers and for the benefit of his followers. The first was, that no landholder or tiller of the land should ever presume to

sleep upon a bedstead, the earth being his proper couch. Secondly, that none of the inhabitants of the country should attempt to strike a Mussulman under penalty of perdition. Thirdly, that no farmer, or keeper of cows, should ever adulterate the milk supplied for the consumption of the true believers. And as these rules were to be observed towards Mussulmans, so were they to be most religiously conformed with by all other men for ever, as a mark of respect to the memory of the conquerors. The laws live in the mouths of the people continually, but I can speak from experience that they are daily infringed. A feigned observance of the first decree is certainly common, wherever the name of Ghazi is worshipped. The circumstance escaped my notice, until I met with mention of it in the writings of some traveller; but it will be found that the sacred law is thus remembered and evaded. The people make use of a bedstead of boards, pretending that Ghazi's prohibition extended only to bedsteads strung with tape or cord, such as are generally used throughout Bengal.

Ghazipore stands upon the north bank of the Ganges, about seventy miles, by water, below Benares. It is not a very extensive town, but is justly celebrated as the Gul-istan, the rose-bed, of Bengal. In the spring of the year an extent of miles around the town presents to the eye a continued garden of roses, than which, nothing can be more beautiful and fragrant. The sight is perfectly dazzling; the plain, as

far as the eye can reach, extending in the same bespangled carpet of red and green. The breezes, too, are loaded with the sweet odour which is wafted far across the river Ganges. The flower is cultivated thus extensively for the manufacture of rosewater, that of Ghazipore being justly esteemed as surpassing in excellence every production of the sort. Whether or not this may be attributable to the superiority of the flowers, or the process of distillation, I cannot say; but as the roses did not appear to me to possess greater fragrance than others of their class, I should rather refer it to the latter cause; unless, indeed, it be that the wonderful abundance of the material enables them to be more lavish in its decoction, than is elsewhere possible. It is no less cheap than excellent: a gallon of the most delicious may be purchased for seven or eight shillings. They do not, however, understand at Ghazipore, the art of distilling the *atr* of roses in the same perfection as the Persians. The spurious compound which they endeavour to palm upon the traveller is weak, and possesses a sickly disagreeable odour foreign to the rose; but the purchaser is often deceived by a little of the true *atr* being rubbed about the stopper and neck of the bottle. The prices demanded for this miserable imitation are exorbitant; the explanation of which I received from one of the vendors; he assured me that long experience had taught him, that it was part of the character of the English to despise every thing cheap,

and to consider any thing choice and excellent which was extravagantly priced.

The principal object of attraction in Ghazipore is the palace of Sahadut Ali, which was built at the commencement of the last century as a country residence for a Nawab of that name, one of the royal family of Lucknou; and also for the purpose of holding some show of constraint over the people of Ghazipore; whom history declares to have been, from the remotest ages, notorious for their turbulence and discontent, and who still appear determined not to discredit their ancient reputation. The palace is a very beautiful specimen of Mogul architecture, and is in tolerable preservation, though long since deserted by royalty. There is a very finely proportioned arcade which forms the subject of the illustration, and which is the most picturesque part of the building. It forms a front and entrance to the body of the palace, which is mounted upon a high terrace of masonry surrounded with channels for water, and pools and basins of quaint device, in which magnificent jets were once continually playing, but which are now dry and choked with rubbish. The palace itself is planned in the form of an oblong, in the centre of which is a small audience-hall, tastefully decorated and supported by pillars, in the same style as those exhibited in the plate; but the chamber itself is ridiculously small for its object. The angles of the building are terminated in very elegant domed pavilions, the windows of which are of white marble trellis-

work, admirably carved into flowers and running patterns of a purely Eastern character. In one of them is a mean marble slab inlaid in the wall, upon which are engraved in Persian characters the words, '*Izzat alla táála Sahadut Ali,*' (To God the Almighty be praise! Sahadut Ali:) without any of the usual string of title and attribute. Parts of the structure are freestone from Chunar, and other parts are built and ornamented with red sandstone which must have been brought from Allahabad. The site of the palace is particularly fine and commanding; and from the arcade, the view up and down the Ganges is very varied and extensive. Upon a projecting angle of the river bank, it is mounted about fifty feet above the stream, upon the top of an abrupt precipice, protected by a parapet wall; below it are the remains of other stone buildings and fortifications; but the greater part of the available ground has been over run by huts and bazaar hovels, together with a few tawdry Hindoo temples painted red and white. Many of these which would otherwise prove blots in the landscape are rendered highly picturesque by overhanging clusters of the feathery bamboo and tamarind; and some of the roofs are thickly covered in with a broad-leafed melon-plant, the fruit of which is very large and, when ripe, of a deep gold color. All that the scene requires is a handsome *ghát,* or flight of steps, leading down to the water-side, in place of the obnoxious pits and the burning-places for the dead which now occupy the lower part of the bank.

It is strange indeed that the Hindoos, who will lavish *lahks* of rupees upon the construction of a temple or a *ghát*, and who during many generations have had before them the magnificent models of the houses, or rather palaces of the Mussulmans, shall still continue to inhabit the very meanest and most miserable abodes. They are wonderfully ingenious in architecture, their public buildings are as well adapted to their purposes as they are infinite in their designs; the Hindoos themselves are fond of ease and luxury; their lives when relieved from their religious restraints are devoted to pleasure; their wealth is sacrificed to ostentation and public display; and yet their dwellings are mere huts devoid of every sort of comfort. The opulent Hindoo, who is boastfully dedicating the overflowings of his treasury to the erection of monstrous pagodas and interminable flights of steps, contentedly surveys the progress of the work from the door of his narrow hovel; consisting perhaps of only a single wretched apartment for the accommodation of all his family; while the Mussulman with half this wealth is raising superb palaces and lordly mansions, wherein to dwell in state, his comforts reduced and coffers impoverished, for the sake of the outward display of a handsome façade. I have more than once made remarks, and have expressed my surprise upon the subject, to rich men and those of high caste among the Hindoos. They allow that religious prejudice has nothing to do with it; though enjoined to be simple in their manners and abstemious in

their living, their creed by no means denies them the luxuries and state of the palace: their best excuse is the heat of the climate, which induces them to prefer the air, in the shade of a virandah or a tree, to anything like internal comfort or elegance in their house; but there is a more common explanation, and, I believe, the true one, which serves the Hindoo as an answer to every question which he either does not know how, or does not care, to answer—"*dustoor hi*," "it is the custom" —with them a most insuperable reason why no change should be made, even for the better. Singularly contrasted as are the Hindoo and the Mussulman, as though, from their mutual dislike, they had made it their mutual study to become as dissimilar as possible, there is no one distinction, perhaps, which divides these two races of men more remarkably than the fashion and arrangement of their respective habitations.

The natives of Ghazipore affirm that close in the vicinity of this palace, there formerly stood a college for the instruction of the people in literature and science; but that in consequence of the abuse of its purpose, and the practice of forbidden mysteries and *Jáddoo*, a peculiar system of witchcraft, it was destroyed by the Gods. There is no mention of this however in the Ayeen Akbari, the history of the times of Akbar, written by Abul Fazil; nor do the inhabitants offer any evidence of its truth, beyond the vague words of tradition and the traces of foundations, which might certainly be those of a tem-

ple or palace. At all events there are no professors of the black art now existing in the neighbourhood, though, in other parts of India, those who practise it are by no means rare. I had a servant of great intelligence and insatiable curiosity, a native of Ghazipore, from whom I learnt many strange things concerning the Hindoos of the place. Among other things he described to me a sect of Brahmins who are not supposed to be addicted to the practice of sorcery, although very secret in their religious ceremonies, and jealous of certain occult peculiarities of their sect. Rejecting the belief of metempsychosis, which is a very material object of the Hindoo faith, they had adopted doctrines so singularly parallel with those of Pythagoras in all other respects as to leave little doubt as to their real origin. In the first place they teach that the entire universe was created by a Supreme Deity; that the souls of men were, before this life, pre-existent in the divine being,* into which they will ultimately be again merged, after having been purified from all evil and earthly propensities.

These Hindoos are instructed by their priests, not only in matters of religion, and the peculiar prejudices and ceremonies of their order, but, also, in the elements of science and literature. Upon all their fol-

* This idea is most sublimely expressed by these Brahmins, in likening the emanations from the divine spirit to the light and heat given forth by the sun, whose essence is thereby neither diminished nor dispersed.

lowers a profound secrecy is imposed, as to the immediate forms and observances with which their tenets are bound up; they are subject entirely to the Brahmins in the direction of their domestic affairs, and subsist upon a common stock, which is in the hands of the Brahmins. There is throughout all these features such a wonderful resemblance to the doctrines of Pythagoras, that we can only conclude that both spring from the same source. The antiquarian who has not troubled himself to investigate the strange discoveries of the present century in the East will tell us it is probable they were brought by some pilgrim from Egypt or Chaldea, while the philosopher of Samos was teaching in those countries. Of course there has been a considerable admixture of Hindooism with the original system; a whole firmament of lesser divinities is framed to suit the Hindoo mythology, but they are all in subservience to the Supreme Being, who has created and who upholds the universe. Here truly is most abundant matter for speculation, and although aware that this is not exactly its proper place, I cannot refrain from alluding to the strange analogy existing between the religious and social manners of the Hindoos and Egyptians, of which this is a fresh instance. Early education teaches us to regard Egypt as the well and fountain-head of literature, science, and the arts, from whence the streams have flowed on all sides throughout the world: but notwithstanding classic authority, notwithstanding the silence of Greek and Latin authors as

to the civilization of the Hindoos, notwithstanding their continual and consentient testimony in favour of the Egyptians, and in despite of the bias of opinion confirmed by the sanction of ages, the prejudices of education, the predilections in favour of ancient and established lore and history, in defiance of all inclination, it is daily becoming more and more a subject of doubt and enquiry to the learned, whether the palm of antiquity and priority of civilization is justly bestowed upon the Egyptians, or whether it does not in truth belong to the Hindoos.

In mentioning the particular sect of Hindoos,—for such they call themselves,— above described, I have encroached upon matter which I certainly should not have selected for these pages, nor would it have been introduced, had it not arisen necessarily in elucidation of my subject. Having once touched it, I trust I shall be excused for venturing to add another word or two, in the hope of correcting a very general and vulgar error regarding the religion of the Hindoos. I believe that the majority of Christians in this country believe that the "stocks and stones" to which the Hindoos bow are the immediate and only object of their devotion. It may be so in some very few instances, where the people have been blinded, and the religion corrupted, by the ignorance or artful designs of the Brahmins: but this is the perversion, not the religion. The numberless idols are intended and explained by the *Poorans*, or holy commentaries, to be emblems only

of the infinite power and wisdom of the Supreme God, of whose countless attributes, collectively, our narrow minds can form no adequate conception; and being unable to embody the entire divinity in any abstract idea, recourse is had to a separation of the attributes, by which process alone the human intellect can ever duly appreciate the unlimited extent and supremity of this "Spirit of Wisdom." This is evidently intended, from the circumstance that the Hindoos have no image of Brahma, the Great God. There is scarcely one Christian in ten who appears to understand that this belief is inculcated by the Hindoo religion. The Hindoos have no religious hatred of other faiths: their antipathy to the Mussulmans arose, not against their religion, but in consequence of usurpations and oppression: they admit no proselytes, and they aver an opinion that God has given to all people that worship which is best adapted to their own country and habits. The preface to the Brahminical translation of Hindoo laws and observances runs in these words, as translated by Mr. Halhed: "The truly intelligent well know that the difference and variety of created things, and the contrarieties of constitutions, are types of God's wonderful attributes, whose complete power formed all things in the animal, vegetable, and material world; whose benevolence selected man to have dominion and authority over the rest; who having bestowed on him judgment and understanding, gave him supremacy over the corners of the world; who having put into his

hands the control and disposal of things, appointed to each tribe its own religion; and who instituted a variety of castes, and a multitude of different customs, but *views with pleasure in every place the mode of worship particularly appointed to it; He* is with the attendants upon the mosque in counting the sacred beads, as much as *He* is in the temple with the Hindoos at the adoration of the idols." To the greater number of my readers I believe this view of Hindooism will be new and unexpected; but it is familiar to all who have travelled in India, and it is certainly extraordinary that the truth has not, long since, become universally known. I cannot help thinking that it is frequently withheld, lest the Christian public should relax in their efforts of conversion among these people.

At the distance of about two miles from the river side are some extensive Hindoo ruins of *serais* and temples, apparently very ancient, and also several Mussulman tombs and mosques of more recent dates. Among the former are the remains of a *serai* of considerable dimensions, part of which is still in sufficiently good preservation for the accommodation of those travellers who are not very particular about the appearance of their resting-place, or who are superior to the nervous restlessness experienced by some timorous persons when musing upon the dimensions of a gaping chasm in the architecture over-head, from which the loosened mortar does occasionally come rattling down,

but only perhaps when shaken by the sportive gambols of some passing elephant.

The gardens of the natives are here exceedingly pretty; but some of them almost overpower the refined nasal susceptibility of the European, the most powerfully aromatic plants being cultivated for the purpose of distillation. There are also some very beautiful tanks, or sacred artificial basins of water, and several monuments, erected as memorials of *suttis* which have been performed upon the spot. These generally consist of a mere rude pile of masonry, from ten to twenty feet high, of a conical form, and whitewashed; but in my wanderings about the place, I came upon one of a more perishable nature, the intent of which I should not have discovered but for the explanation of a Hindoo, who being a near relative of the self-sacrificed widow, had built a small hut near it, and made it his business to tend and decorate it. It was a thick bower, formed by interlacing the flexile stems of bamboo, the interior of which was of a conical form, presenting very much the appearance of an ever-green temple; upon the side opposite the entrance was a rudely carved trunk of wood, intended to represent the figure of the widow; around the apartment were ranged different small gods, one or two of stone or wood, but the greater number of clay; garlands of flowers were hung round over these, and long branches of the *chumbeli*, or double-blossomed jessamine, twined

in a spiral form, hung pendent from the centre. At the urgent petition of the old man I did not enter this sacred arbour, but I was rather encouraged to gaze upon it from the entrance by his communicative disposition, although by his continual allusions to his extreme poverty and my unlimited wealth, I was persuaded that his forward civilities were prompted by the hope of alms. I promised him some small coin if he would relate to me the story of

THE SUTTI.

He very readily complied, to the following effect; having first begged permission to seat himself, on the plea of his great age and infirmity; for it fortunately happens that all, or nearly all the natives whom we find in these picturesque situations are tottering with venerable years; the young and active being required to devote their powers to the support of their families. Having seated himself upon his heels, a gymnastic feat which all the natives of Hindostan practise from infancy, he thus commenced his tale with a proem worthy of a court.

"Protector of the Poor, good fortune is written upon your brow; may your proper destiny never be thwarted by your evil genius; may you be as successful in all your great undertakings as you are fortunate in the less important objects of your will. Yes, chosen of heaven, you are very fortunate in

having applied to your devoted slave Baba Kulloo for the information you require. Though no better than an insect in the greatness of your honour's presence, who is there that is able to speak of the heroism, the triumphant virtue, of the beautiful Lall Radha, with better assurance of truth, than her own nephew Babba Kulloo? whose hand supported her during the long illness of Bhagut, her husband, whose hand kindled the sacred pile, and whose hand gathered the blackened bones. As long as it shall please the great Brahma to grant me life and sufficient strength, I will not fail daily to sprinkle this spot with the milk of the holy cow and the purifying water of the sacred Ganges, in honour of that great and glorious day.

"Great Sir, I am told that the *Sahib log* (gentlemen, applied as a term of distinction to the English) believe that we were wont to compel our widows to this sacrifice, before they extended the arm of power to prevent us. This is quite erroneous. The Shastra most urgently forbids force to be used; the sacrifice must be perfectly voluntary in all its stages to be acceptable to the divine Brahma. Coercion could not be employed without dishonour to the Brahmins and the widow's friends, while the virtue of the sacrifice would be lost. Our sacred law does not exact or command a compliance with this rite, though it certainly approves of and encourages it. The most emphatic words upon the subject are these; '*It is*

proper for a woman to cast herself upon the funeral pile of her husband,'* but there is no strict command; neither are there any denunciations against such as may neglect this holy sacrifice, although it is true that glory and blessings in a future state are promised as a reward to those who observe it. Those who decline the trial are commanded to cut off their hair, cast off their ornaments, to observe inviolable chastity, and to labour in the service of their children. What more could be required? except among those people whose widows are taken to wife by the brothers

* In the Pooran of Angira it is thus written. "The woman who mounts the funeral pile of her deceased husband equals herself to Arundhoti, the wife of Vashista, and enjoys bliss in heaven with her husband. She dwells with him in heaven for thirty-five millions of years, which is equal to the number of hairs upon the human body, and by her own power taking her husband up, in the same manner as a snake-catcher would take a snake out of its hole, remains with him in diversion. She who thus goes with her husband to the other world purifies three generations, that is, the generations of her mother's side, father's side, and husband's side; and so she being reckoned the purest and the best in fame among women, becomes too dear to her husband, and continues to delight him during fourteen *Indras*, and although her husband be guilty of slaying a Brahmin or friend, or be ungrateful of past deeds, yet is his wife capable of purifying him from all these sins." Here the reward promised is not everlasting, but only for a stated term. Now eternal bliss, "absorption in Brahma," is promised throughout the Shastras to those who continue to lead a holy and religious life, in thorough purity, and in the regular fulfilment of Brahma's commands. These words are quoted from the Veda; "By living in the practice of regular duties the mind may be purified. Hereafter by hearing, reflecting, and constantly meditating upon the Supreme Being, absorption in Brahma may be attained. Therefore, from a desire during life of future fruition, life ought not to be destroyed." Thus is a pure and holy life inculcated as infinitely more acceptable to Brahma than self immolation on the funeral pile.

of the deceased. But with the prospect of long ages of bliss in the glorious mansions of paradise upon the one hand, and the sight of a dreary and dismantled home of servitude and degradation on the other, who would be slow to choose? Who would hesitate to hurry through the fiery portals, to the gardens of heavenly joy and splendour, when to linger is to be excluded for ever; and this for the sake of wandering on a few more hours over the barren scorching wilds of a joyless and solitary desert. Hear how the wise and faithful Lall Radha made her choice. As she had been kind and dutiful to her husband in life, so was she not to be restrained from hastening, at once, to join him in that future world of pure delight, which already she had won for herself by her devoted life—

> 'She was a pearl too chaste on earth to dwell
> And waste her splendour in this earthly shell.'*

May she for ever enjoy a glorious fulfilment of the divine Brahma's promise!

"Your slave's father, whose name was Dewal, and Bhagut, the husband of Lall Radha, were twins, the only children of my grandfather, a man of the Khetri caste, highly esteemed by his relations and his friends for his equal temper, his suavity of manners, his good sense, and ready courage. In his youth he was remarkable for the noble beauty of his countenance, great activity and bodily strength, together with a

* Arabic Poem.

most princely bearing. Being moreover a man of great piety, he was beloved among the Brahmins, and by them he was persuaded to embrace the active duties of his caste and join the forces of the Maharhattas, under the banners of Madhaji Scindia, who was then in co-operation with Trimbuck Mamma, to oppose the daily injuries which were practised against the religious notions of the Hindoos, both by the Mahommedan and British powers; who not only before our eyes delighted to insult our religion, by overburdening and cruelly treating the ox, but hesitated not to slay and feed upon that sacred animal. Madhaji Scindia was careful to observe and protect, even in his times of greatest difficulty, all the rites and ceremonies of our faith; and to him we looked to repel the wanton attacks of our insulting foes.

"It was the good fortune of my grandfather, during the first few years of his service, to distinguish himself in many successive actions, by which he obtained both fame and riches; but in the year 1771, when opposed to Hyder Ali, he is said to have wrought wonders in battle. The army of that chief was utterly routed, fifteen thousand of his choicest troops lay dead upon the field: my noble grandsire, supported by ten of his own followers, had hewn his way, through the ranks of the enemy, to the very person of the Moslem chief, to whom he offered quarter, claiming him as his prisoner. Hyder Ali was for a moment aghast at his peril, but seeing that the day was lost and his person

at the mercy of a very small band of the enemy, he called lustily upon his guards for rescue, and, in a second, seven of his captors were prostrate on the plain, and my grandfather and three of his gallant men were taken prisoners and hurried from the field in rapid flight.

"Hyder was excited to frenzy by the unexpected loss of a victory which he had already called his own, and by the disproportionate carnage between his own ranks and those of the foe; moreover he was stirred to fury and revenge by the sight of the princely forms and demeanour of the few prisoners whom he had carried off. From his darkly clouded brow he cast upon them a glance of envious hate and rage, and, in a voice of thunder, commanded them to be shot like dogs and exposed to the vultures. Then recalling his sentence he cried with a fiendish laugh; 'Nay! let these Pagans bear witness how greatly we esteem their boasted beauty and their prowess. It were cruel to withhold such able gallants from their anxious loves, their weeping mistresses; 'twere cruel to keep back such god-like heroes from their victorious and rejoicing comrades. Unbind them; give them their liberty; restore them to their fond flatterers and their noble compatriots. Let them go and tell of their glorious deeds among our people; how they took Hyder Ali prisoner with all his army and carried them into a far land and barred them in rocky prisons; or let them modestly discount the value of

their heroic deeds, by telling of the craven-hearted fear and shrinking cowardice of their victims. Cast off those paltry cords from the hands of these demi-gods; arm them with costly and well-tried weapons; fill well their girdles with gold; and mounting them upon the noblest Arabs in my camp, with abject deference and all courtly honour set them forth upon their journey. But, ere they depart, to render them more worthy the caresses of their queens, more eloquent in their own praise and our disgrace, more powerful in battle when next we meet, just clip their ears and noses from their heads, burn out their tongues, take from them the fingers of the right hand, and snap in twain the bones of their right arms. Hence! Nay; here in my presence shall this compliment be paid them.'

"Thus mutilated did my grandfather return to the camp of the conqueror with his three followers, and shortly hence retired to Ghazipore, where his relations dwelt, and where he had left his wife and two sons for protection. He did not long survive his cruel misfortune; but praised be Brahma, ere he died he was deeply avenged on his mutilators; for shortly after his return to the camp, the Maharhatta army captured a whole regiment of Hyder Ali's *sipahies*, and retaliated upon them the same punishment, sending them to hail their chief, tied back to back, with black banners flying between them. Under these painful circumstances were my father and Bhagut, my uncle, deprived of both

their parents while they were yet boys, for my grandmother did not hesitate to follow her deceased lord to the funeral pile. Yonder is the *mhut* which records her virtue. Praised be Brahma!

"The estate of my grandsire was equally divided between his twin sons, Bhagut and my father; but they being still children, their property was placed in the charge of their relations, who faithlessly squandered the greater portion of it for their own enjoyment;—may they meet with their reward!—And thus our family became again impoverished, and were compelled to seek such employment as was consistent with their caste. Having both been betrothed in marriage shortly before their father's death, they in their youth thirsted for glory, and promising to return in the course of two years to claim their brides, they enlisted under the standards of the Maharhattas, and marched against the English forces; but Brahma was not pleased that they should engage in the dangers of warfare, for Hyder Ali having at this time invaded the Carnatic, the British General in 1802 concluded a treaty of peace with the Maharhattas, restoring all conquest except the island of Salsette; and the arms of the Maharhattas being henceforward frequently turned against the peaceful occupiers of the soil, Bhagut and my father became disgusted with their marauding system of plunder, and returned to Ghazipore; where they claimed their brides and took them home to the house which they shared in common.

"Be pleased for a moment, Protector of the Poor, to regard the now faded features and the no-longer-youthful frame of your humble slave." Here the old man reared himself to the height of his stature, looking proudly around him. "Do you not confess that, although now time-worn and care-worn, and at all times insignificant in your honour's presence, the son of Dewal has in his youth possessed both strength and grace and beauty? If so, how much more perfect was Dewal himself. Dewal and Bhagut were almost as remarkable for their noble bearing and their beauty as was their father, and the divine Brahma saw fit to bless them with wives of equal loveliness and excellence. The first years of their married life, though spent in the absence of wealth and grandeur, were those of happiness and mutual delight. But, alas! human felicity can never be complete. The content and satisfaction which at first reigned within our dwelling were sadly broken up, when, as the seasons came and passed away, the amiable Lall Radha remained unblessed with any offspring; while in the course of six years my mother's family consisted of no less than five. Neither envy nor jealousy entered the heart of that excellent woman, though daily her cheek sunk with secret grief, and the hilarity of youth and happiness fled from her languid but all-beautiful form. It was evident that the displeasure of God was upon her or her husband; fasting and penance, prayer and sacrifice were alike ineffectual; and at last the devout Bhagut resolved

to perform a pilgrimage to Allahabad and Hurdwar, observing the most rigorous vows of toil and abstinence to remove the displeasure of the great Brahma; but he was compelled, in compliance with the entreaties of his brother and sister-in-law, to leave his darling partner under their care and protection, her daily declining health rendering her quite unable to attempt the journey.

"The resolute Bhagut tore himself from the entwined arms of his wife, and commenced his painful pilgrimage. From that day the oppression of sickness began to be removed from the life of Lall Radha, and in a very few months the bright hue of health resumed its resting place on her soft cheek. Her glancing eye, her once more musical voice spoke joy, and hope, and confidence in the safe and happy return of Bhagut. The days rolled round, the weeks and months passed on, and, as Bhagut returned not, anxiety took possession of her heart: still her fears were only such as a wife's love of necessity entertains; though her religious confidence was for a moment dashed with heart-heaving apprehension, it was unspoken, and the next moment dispelled with penitence for her unholy doubt.

A year had passed away since Bhagut had taken his departure. It was the anniversary of that occurrence, and the beautiful Lall Radha, full of joy and hope, spoke with energetic faith her assurance that the long absent pilgrim would return that day. Having performed her ablutions and devotion, she dressed herself with more than usual care, and putting on her bridal orna-

ments, decorated her glossy hair with a flower of the water-lily. Throughout the sultry day we passed our time under the thick and fragrant shade of the drooping bamboos, my mother and the beautiful Lall Radha being employed with their favourite operation of spinning. Lively and full of hope, Lall Radha continued to pursue her task, her quick eye glancing continually in all directions, but still without unseemly fear or doubt. Even as the sun declined towards the west, no change was visible, except that, perhaps, her spirit rose anew, and the blush of health upon her cheek deepened its colour. Suddenly a long and piercing shriek rung through the air, re-echoed back by the surrounding woods; and lo! a ghastly and emaciated being, more resembling the grim phantoms of the dead than anything of human life, lay prostrate on the earth before the terrified Lall Radha, kissing her feet, and grasping her knees with the cold and heavy grip of exhausted strength. It was the pilgrim Bhagut, who, with a last effort of his fainting energies, had dragged himself through the boughs of bamboo, and cast himself at the feet of his adored wife, the cruel privations of his pilgrimage fully remunerated by seeing his beloved one restored to health and all her youthful beauty, whom he had despaired of ever meeting more in this life.

"All that the kindest care and attention of a fond wife and devoted relations could do for the nourishment of the emaciated and enfeebled Bhagut was tenderly bestowed upon him; but alas! his condition was sad

indeed, his strength destroyed, and his constitution undermined. For a few months he somewhat recovered from his extreme debility, and was enabled to give an account of his hard and dangerous pilgrimage; but disease had sapped the foundations of his life, and it was evident that he could not much longer continue with us. He lingered in trial and suffering about two years after his return, and then was gathered to his fathers. May God reward his excellence! At the time of Bhagut's death I was about fourteen years of age, and throughout his illness I had not ceased to aid and comfort both him and the incomparable Lall Radha. When the torch of life was about to expire, we carried him to the Ganges bank, and placed him over the sacred stream until animation had fled; and this had no sooner taken place than the heroic Lall Radha declared her intention of burning with the corpse of her beloved. May the great Brahma be graciously pleased by long expiation on our parts to forgive us! I regret to confess that so dearly was our beautiful relative beloved, that we joined in one voice to dissuade her from her holy purpose; but, God be praised, she was proof against our evil temptations, her determination was inflexible; she turned a deaf ear to our entreaties, and even reproved the Brahmins for lukewarmness: for when they beheld her exceeding beauty they faltered in their commendations of her choice.

"Fearing intervention from the British authorities it was decided that this solemn rite, contrary to the

usual practice, should be performed at a distance from the river side; the margin of the consecrated tank was selected for the purpose. After ceremonies of purification had been performed upon the spot, strong stakes of bamboo were driven into the ground, enclosing an oblong space* about seven feet in length, and six in breadth, the stakes being about eight feet in height: within this enclosure the pile was built of straw, and boughs, and logs of wood: upon the top a small arbour was constructed of wreathed bamboos, and this was hung with flowers within and without. About an hour after the sun had risen, prayers and ablutions having been carefully and devoutly performed by all, more especially by the Brahmins and Lall Radha, who was also otherwise purified and fitted for the sacrifice, the corpse of the deceased husband was brought from the house, attended by the administering Brahmins, and surrounded by the silent and weeping friends and relations of the family. Immediately following the corpse came Lall Radha, enveloped in a scarlet veil which completely hid her beautiful person from view. When the body was placed upon the pile, the feet being towards the west, the Brahmins took the veil from Lall Radha, and, for the first time, the glaring multitude were suffered

* It is worthy of remark, that all castes of the Hindoos have a superstitious prejudice against anything which is square, and will invariably find some expedient for altering its dimensions, either by cutting off or adding, or by removing the corners of such a figure.

to gaze upon that lovely face and form; but the holy woman was too deeply engaged in solemn prayer and converse with Brahma to be sensible of their presence, or of the murmur of admiration which ran through the crowd. Then turning with a steady look and solemn demeanour to her relations, she took from her person, one by one, all her ornaments, and distributed them as tokens of her love. One jewel only she retained, *the tali*, or amulet placed round her neck by her deceased husband on the nuptial day; this she silently pressed to her lips, then separately embracing each of her female relations, and bestowing a farewell look upon the rest, she unbound her hair, which flowed in thick and shining ringlets almost to her feet, gave her right hand to the principal Brahmin, who led her with ceremony three times round the pile, and then stopped with her face towards it, upon the side where she was to ascend. Having mounted two or three steps, the beautiful woman stood still, and pressing her hands upon the cold feet of her lifeless husband, she raised them to her forehead, in token of cheerful submission: she then ascended, and crept within the little arbour, seating herself at the head of her lord, her right hand resting upon his head. The torch was placed in my hand, and overwhelmed with commingled emotions I fired the pile. Smoke and flame in an instant envelóped the scene, and amid the deafening shouts of the multitude I sank senseless

upon the earth. I was quickly restored to sense, but already the devouring element had reduced the funeral pile to a heap of charred and smouldering timber. The assembled Brahmins strewed the ashes around, and with a trembling hand I assisted my father to gather the blackened bones of my beloved uncle and aunt, when having placed them in an earthen vessel we carried them to the Ganges, and with prayer and reverence committed them to the sacred stream.

"My mother died not many months after the *sutti* had taken place, having set her affections upon a future state of bliss with Lall Radha; and my father did not many years survive her. Your slave married, and has been blessed with three sons, who are servants to your noble countrymen, whom may God long preserve to distribute peace and justice among us! I am quickly going down to the Ganges, and until that day of release shall arrive, I am content to live in this humble hut, and guard and decorate this arbour, for which God rewards me by occasional alms from the charitable."

I ordered my attendant to disburse from my treasury to Baba Kulloo the sum of eight annas (about ten pence), for which unexampled display of generosity my ears were refreshed with abundant streams of the most hyperbolical praise and blessing, so long as I continued within reach of the old man's voice.

Among the numerous ruins, both Hindoo and Mussulman, before mentioned, as being worthy the traveller's notice at this place, there appear to be reliques of all ages. In some instances, where, by the accumulation of material, it is evident that a very large fabric has stood, even the stone itself is fast mouldering to dust; in other cases buildings are found entire and in excellent preservation. Abutting upon the north side of the bazaar is an elegant mosque of no great antiquity, but deserving notice from the peculiar style of its domes and minarets. The accompanying plate gives a complete view of the building, which, it is trusted, will be intelligible without the necessity of a long verbal description. It is built of stone and small brick, stuccoed both outside and within, with here and there a carved cornice of coarse marble projecting from the plaster. The form is good, and the effect somewhat grand, but there is none of the finish and costly workmanship which is bestowed upon these buildings in the Doáb and the countries farther westward. This mosque is kept in repair for the purposes of devotion, several priests being attached to its service; it is frequented by most of the respectable Mussulmans in Ghazipore, and is sometimes an object of attraction to men of rank and distinction round about.

In the rear of the mosque is a large well, down which it is reported that Aurungzebe thrust the wives of fifty young Hindoos, after he had cruelly

put the youths themselves to the sword. Truly it seems as if every object which we explore in India must have some fearful tale of massacre or bloodshed attached to it, which cannot fail to excite our sympathies, and show us the evils of barbarism, the merciless dealings of those whose savage hearts have not been humanized by culture and civilization. It is only wonderful that in the storm of war and zealous bigotry which not long since raged throughout Hindostan and deluged the land with blood from north to south, dyeing the rivers purple with human gore, and scattering the terrified inhabitants from their homes, to seek refuge in the deep cover of the forest, until retaliation could be safely enjoyed; I say it is surprising that any religious buildings of either faith remain at all to this day.

But it is not a little remarkable that while the Mussulman armies were devastating and subverting every temple and every religious edifice of the Hindoos, which they could bring under their destroying hands, the Hindoos themselves paid due respect to the mosques and sacred buildings of their enemies, nor were they ever guilty of their mutilation. It is the nature of superstition to be swayed more by fear than by hope, and the credulity of the Hindoo is not more remarkable than his tolerance of, or even his reverence for other religious faiths. A conscientious Hindoo would esteem it a crime to deface a Moslem place of sanctity, or a Christian church, and would anti-

cipate retribution for such an offence. For the same reason it will be found, that powerful as is the personal antipathy still existing between the two people, the Hindoo is constantly found paying the same tokens of fear and reverence to the Mahommedan saints as to the gods of his own mythology. Continually we behold the half-starved pilgrim bestowing alms upon the Mussulman mendicant, for the sake of his prayers and blessings, and not unfrequently will the observant Hindoo pay a devout reverence on passing a Christian church or place of burial. Thus, while the Moslems have polluted, destroyed, and pillaged all the sacred edifices and treasures which they could wrest from the Hindoos, their own mosques and sacerdotal accumulations have remained intact, except in moments of ungovernable excitement and exasperation. In answer to a question which I once put to a Hindoo upon this subject, I was told, that should a man of any caste forget his religious obligation to hold sacred, and undefiled, and uninjured all places of worship whatsoever, he would have incurred the heavy displeasure of the gods, who would not accept his offerings of flowers, and would also have averted the favour of the spirits of his forefathers, who would reject his libations of holy water until full expiation should have been made for the offence. It is sufficient for the sincere Hindoo that these things are commanded in the Shastras; it would be sacrilege even in a Brahmin to enquire the reason

why such observances have been established by holy law. If they have been ordered, they must be infallibly wise and salutary, and are therefore performed without hesitation, whether the tendency be proved to be good or evil.

But while the tolerant Hindoo is careful to avoid a slight or passing offence even to the sacred things of an inimicable faith, he may at the same moment, with an easy conscience, be practising and encouraging the most demoralising and debasing acts; his inward ease and satisfaction depending on falsehood rather than on truth, on chicanery rather than on justice or innocence; virtuous independence is utterly lost, perjury and every species of corruption may be indulged in, so long as they are not contrary to the exact letter of the law; the most daring crime, the most profligate oppression may be practised without remorse, without fear of public execration or retribution, if the authority of the Shastras, the Vedans, or the Poorans, can be brought to support it; at the same time that the most trifling breach of morality will disquiet and render miserable the unfortunate aggressor, if the laws have forbidden it. With the Hindoos, two things are infallible and not to be resisted; the commands of their Shastras, and the commands of their chiefs.

BENARES.

INFANTICIDE.

Hear it not ye stars!
And thou pale moon! turn paler at the sound.
YOUNG.

THE great and holy city of Benares has been too frequently, and too ably described, to require in these pages any detailed account of its character and general appearance. Aurungzebe's towering mosque, out-topping the thousand Hindoo temples, the gilded domes, the painted cupolas, and strangely diverse forms of spire and turret, together with the noble flights of steps, the hanging balconies and terraced *ghâts*, have been the favourite theme of each successive traveller who has visited this famous spot. Benares is the centre point of Hindoo wealth, of Hindoo traffic, of Hindoo learning and science, of Hindoo display, and of Hindoo superstition, fanaticism, and crime. All these are here made to assume the most imposing forms, and are calculated to astonish and disgust the European, no less than they delude the credulous Hindoo. I remember to have seen in the writings

of some traveller—the Abbé Dubois, I think—a humourous division of the Hindoo population into two classes, the dupes and the impostors; the former embracing all the various castes except one, and the latter, the Brahmins, forming that exception. Of the scene which Benares exhibits during the Doorga Pooja, and other religious festivals, it is altogether beyond the power of words to convey any just idea. The temples and other buildings, painted and decorated with flags for the occasion, appear to stand in a rolling sea of human beings, so dense is the mass of pilgrims which obstructs the narrow streets, and spreads itself over every spot of ground where there is room for the foot to rest. The deafening shouts and screams, and blowing of horns, the overpowering heat and sickening effluvia can hardly be acceptable to the gods; they are altogether beyond the ability of mortal endurance; hundreds of lives are lost in the press, and, unless dispersed by the hand of timely authority, the obnoxious multitude is sure to produce a pestilence within the city.

As the temples are infinitely various in appearance, so are the innumerable castes and tribes who frequent the place; it being not only a rendezvous for pilgrims, but the resort of merchants, pedlars, thieves, and mendicants, from all quarters of the East, whose personal appearance and costume are equally dissimilar. Let the reader who may wish them enumerated and described run his eye over a map of Asia,

and refer to the history of each division, he will readily allow the necessity of omitting such a passage, however picturesque it might be; unless, indeed, the weighty taste of our ancestors should suddenly return and convert our petit annuals into the profound folios, those "harbours of inexpungable ignorance," of the olden time.

The ancient name of Benares is Kasi (the magnificent), and by this it is still called among the Brahmins, whose history of the place is so authentic and entertaining as to deserve a few lines where an uninteresting statistical account is not allowed even a few words. For a trifling sum of money this history may be obtained vivâ voce from any Brahmin; I thus became possessed of it, and being struck with the effect imparted to it by the manner of relation, I shall as nearly as possible adhere to the priest's words.

"It is commonly thought by Christians, Mohammedans, and others who are unacquainted with the truth, that this Holy City of Kasi rests upon a portion of this earth, but such an opinion is altogether erroneous, as it has been revealed to us by the gods, and as our senses are at times permitted to discover. The world itself, since the day of its creation, has remained supported upon the thousand heads of the serpent Ananta (eternity), and so it will continue to be upheld until the command of Brahma shall be proclaimed for it to be for ever enveloped in the coils of that interminable

deity. Now, when the judgment takes place, the City of Kasi, with a circumference of seven *kos* (about ten miles) from its centre, will alone remain firm; for it rests not upon the heads of Ananta, but is fixed upon the three points of the trident of Siva or Mahadeo, to whose care it will be entrusted. All who now die within its walls are blessed, and those who are found within it on that eventful day shall be blessed a thousand-fold. Ages before the Mahommedan conquest of this city by Sultan Mohammed, which happened in the eleventh century; ages before it was made subservient to the Patans, which was a hundred centuries earlier; ages before Kasi was the second capital of the Hindoo kingdom of Kanaoj, which was the case a hundred centuries before that; ages before history has any record, Siva built this wonderful city—of the purest gold, and all its temples of precious stones; but, alas! the iniquity of man contaminates and destroys the beauty of every thing divine; in consequence of the heinous sins of the people, the precious material of this sacred place was deteriorated, and eventually changed into stone, by permission of the founder Siva. No sooner had this been effected, than Viasa, that god-like sage, who with infinite wisdom compiled the sacred Vedas, having conceived a jealousy for the renown and splendour of Siva's glorious city, encouraged by the fall of its magnificence, came hastily with his followers and a large company of workmen, and encamped upon the bank of the Ganges, imme-

diately opposite to Benares; and then and there proclaimed his design of building a more splendid city than the favourite of the god Siva, which it should eclipse and eventually swallow up, even though the new city should be suspended over the Ganges bed. This loud proclamation Viasa caused to be sounded abroad for the purpose of alluring from Kasi the skilful craftsmen and artificers, for the more perfect execution of his design. Siva was not deaf to the news which threatened to destroy his capital, but being unwilling openly to oppose the schemes of Viasa, to whom he was otherwise greatly indebted, he commissioned his first-born son, Genesa, the god of wisdom and artifice, to undermine and subvert the plots of his new enemy. Genesa, having entered the camp of the sage Viasa as an idler and one seeking employment, offered his services as a labourer upon this great undertaking; but Viasa beholding the exceeding skill and shrewdness of the new comer, took him into his favour, explained to him his designs, and sought his counsel in all difficulties. Thus Genesa made himself fully acquainted with the intentions of the projector, and finding that nothing short of destruction to Kasi would satisfy his inordinate jealousy, he so perplexed his master with abstruse and insolvable propositions, that Viasa became displeased, and could not restrain himself from giving vent to his wrath in words of anger and opprobrium. This was the exact purpose of Genesa's behaviour, he being well persuaded

that 'with the wise man, impatience is the commencement of folly.' He therefore continued daily to renew his questions, and sorely vexed his master, until at last, he enquired what reward would be granted by the great Brahma, in the next world, to those who should be born, or those who should die, within the new city. To this the venerable Viasa could make no reply; he was conscious that he could not with truth make any promises in the name of the great Brahma, his design having commenced without his divine command; and he did not dare to declare that no reward was allotted for such of his people, lest they should desert his newly raised walls, and return to the chosen city of Siva; so he held his peace. But the cunning Genesa, having thus perplexed the sage, continued during seven days to follow him with importunity for an answer, in presence of the assembled throng; and this pertinacious behaviour of the disguised god of wisdom so exasperated Viasa, that at last, in a sudden ebullition of wrath, he declared that after death their souls would transmigrate, and re-appear upon earth in the forms of asses. This so terrified all the people and the workmen, that they immediately deserted the city, nor could any be prevailed upon to complete it. The walls and foundations of the palaces and temples remain to this day upon the opposite bank, and are called the Shahur of Viasa Kasi. Siva, being thus relieved from his presumptuous rival, promised to restore his city to its pristine magnificence if the in-

habitants would resume their original purity of life, but they did not heed his wishes, nor ceased their evil practices, and thus they have continued to live through successive generations, the countenance of the god Siva being half averted from them. Lately, as it may be seen, the excesses and wickedness of the inhabitants are again increasing, and now the indignant Siva is beginning to display his anger by turning the stone edifices into huts of mud and thatch."

All this is what has been revealed to the Brahmins by the gods; but being desirous of knowing something about those evidences of the city's independence of this earth, which the Brahmins had assured me were at times disclosed to human perception, I put some questions upon the subject; and for the satisfaction of my curiosity was supplied with the following facts. Frequently, when the monsoon opens with a deluge of rain upon the surrounding country, not a drop falls within the sacred limits of Benares; while at other times it will shower down abundantly upon the city when the parched soil around is vainly panting for moisture. At times it will occur, that while the tempest and the hurricane are devastating the whole country round about, sweeping away the villages, uprooting the forests, and levelling the crops; the holy Kasi will remain quiescent and unhurt. The lightnings will consume whole towns, the thunders shake citadels from their lofty foundations, while Benares, upheld from injury, remains intact; or, when

the terrible Siva has just cause to inflict punishment, the fire has come down and devoured their temples, while the country around has received no such chastisement. And again, which proves beyond a doubt the city's isolated position, the earthquakes, which have undulated through the adjacent plains, upsetting every description of building in their desolating progress, have never been known to approach within the charmed limits of their seven *kos;* while the upheaved land and tottering hills, at no great distance, have given fearful proof of the power at work without; the history of untold ages records that no symptom of such a convulsion, ever so slight, has been known or felt in Benares.

It has been computed, that out of the six hundred thousand souls who form the population of Benares, eighty thousand are officiating Brahmins attached to the temples, exclusive of the thousands who daily visit it from other parts of the country. It is not, however, to be supposed, that this immense multitude of priests subsist entirely upon the charity or the fees of their congregations. It is true that a small tribute is received by them from all whom they assist by their prayers or their advice, and during festivals, every devout passenger casts a mite into their treasury; but this of course would be quite insufficient for the support of so vast a swarm of idlers. Many of the temples are endowed with overflowing funds for their support, and to others are attached the revenue of large tracts of

land. From these stores they are obliged, after providing for their own necessities, to administer assistance to the sick or enfeebled among the pilgrims, who have no means of their own. What restrictions are placed over these rapacious harpies to secure a punctual performance of the duty I know not, but certain it is, that they are not unfrequently observed to render such goodly services to the distressed; though judging from what an European may know of their character, I should be of opinion that there exists not a more heartless race of men, or any so utterly unsympathising in the sufferings of their fellow-creatures as these Brahmins.

The greater part of the temples are dedicated to Siva, or to his son Genesa, these being the deities now especially interested in the welfare of the city, as may be seen by the foregoing history; but there also appear to be not a few in honour of every other divinity in the Hindoo pantheon. The worship of Siva is performed amidst the grossest obscenities, which are utterly disgraceful to humanity, but which, being regarded as divine, it is wonderful to state, do not move to shame even the most modest of the female votaries. The insignia of this deity, and the symbols of his presence within the temple, are not to be mentioned. According to the doctrine of metempsychosis, to destroy is only to regenerate in a new form, and therefore Siva, the god of destruction, is worshipped also as the author of life; and in these contrasted characters, he is at

once, and in the same temple, an object of praise and of expostulation, for the Hindoos do not scruple to speak their displeasure with any of their deities save Brahma. In the adoration of Genesa, the God of Wisdom, there is no apparent want of decency; he is always addressed as "that God upon whose glorious forehead the new moon is painted with the froth of Ganga" (the Ganges), and is generally represented sitting cross-legged, with four arms and hands, and having the head and proboscis of an elephant. His temples are profusely ornamented with carvings and paintings of the different limbs of this animals but most frequently of the head, repetitions of which often form the ornamental designs of the cornices and pillars. At Mhow, in the province of Allahabad, I remember to have seen a small temple of this god, in which all the columns supporting the building are made to represent the hind legs of the elephant, and the top of the roof within is adorned with an imitation of the tusks meeting round the proboscises, which depend from the centre, partly of stone, and partly of wood.

The annexed plate represents the interior of one of the temples of Genesa at Benares, where all the capitals of the pillars are wrought into monstrous heads of a gigantic size, carved in red sandstone, of which material the entire temple is constructed. All the ornaments have been greatly defaced, and the principal image of the god himself has evidently been the chief object of mutilation. The odium of these dilapida-

tions rests with the bigoted followers of Mohummed, who took possession of Benares during the reign of Aurungzebe, and left marks of their zealous fury upon all the sacred buildings.

The revolting crime of infanticide was at one time carried to a great height in Benares and the adjacent districts; and there can be little doubt, by the account of the Mussulmen, that it is still occasionally practised, in defiance of the active measures for its prevention adopted by the government. The police of course deny this statement, but they have no access to the *zenanas* and private apartments of the Rajas and petty princes, and therefore can have no assurance of its total discontinuance. It is true that numerous chiefs, among whom the daughters were formerly destroyed immediately after birth, have in many instances reared them, in compliance with their agreement with the British government; but in nearly all these families the female children form but a very few in comparison with the males, which alone is sufficient ground for suspicion. The great supporters of this iniquitous practice were formerly the Rajhpoots, the Rajhkomars, and the Rajhvansis, among whom a single female infant was never permitted to exist, nor did they consider their destruction as an act of sin or cruelty, though I am unable to believe, as many have affirmed, that they regarded the sacrifice as an acceptable offering to the gods. It appears rather to have originated in convenience, on account of the ruinous expense attending

Temple of Ganesa Benares

their marriage, and to have been practised without fear of offence to the deities, for their belief is, that the souls of those daughters who were thus destroyed were eventually returned to them in the persons of sons; and when this did not appear to be borne out by the birth of a male child, it only followed that Siva was displeased, and conciliation was resorted to, until a son should really be born to them. In these cases it was usual to seek propitiation by placing the next female infant in the hands of the Brahmins, to be solemnly sacrificed in the temple of Genesa, whereby that god might be moved to compassion for the babe, and be induced to intercede with Siva for the future birth of male children to the parents. It is easy to perceive whence this delusion had its commencement, since a handsome douceur to the immolating priests was an indispensable part of the ceremony, which in all respects differed from the method of destruction privately used. In the latter place the operation was performed with very little form or expense, by what the Hindoos call *drinking milk*. No sooner had the sex of the infant been ascertained, than a cauldron of warm milk was brought into the apartment where the mother lay, and after prayers for the child's return in the form of a son, the little innocent was immersed in the milk, and held down until life became extinct, and then it was carried to the Ganges and thrown into the stream. When, however, the deed was committed to the Brahmins to be executed by way of sacrifice to Genesa, the

poor babe was carried to the temple, and, being laid upon its back, was, after certain diabolical ceremonies, destroyed by the club of the inhuman *fakhir*. This, however, it is but fair to state, was related to me by a Mussulman, who will never lose an opportunity of placing the religious conduct of the Hindoos in the most odious light possible. Among themselves, the very word Hindoo has become a word of abuse and opprobrium. The Mussulman is equally careful to conceal that there are certain heretical tribes of his own people who, through motives of indolence and self-interest, have been led to follow this barbarous custom of infanticide, which is, by the doctrines of Mohammedan law, denounced as a foul stain upon humanity, and prohibited under the most severe penalties both temporal and eternal. Very many instances of Mussulman families, however, are upon record, in which it has been openly practised, and the only explanation assigned is proudly affirmed to be, that their daughters could not be allied to any princes in the world without disgrace. Such are among the Jháts, the Mehwattis, and the Scusniwals, the former chiefs of Bhurtpore.

About the time that the British government first began to take active measures for the suppression of this most inhuman crime, there was little difficulty in obtaining the concurrence in its abolition of nearly all those who practised it; not in consequence of any conviction of its enormity, but for the sake of continuing in amity with our power. Among others, it had been

found necessary to obtain from the Jahrjas a solemn bond of agreement to abandon this inhuman custom. Now, in compliance with his promise, the Jahrja of Rajh-Kotti, being apprised that his wife was about to be confined, gave orders that if the infant should prove to be a female it should be preserved; and impatient of suspense, he collected a band of his followers, and went forth upon a hunting excursion, having fully persuaded himself that his virtuous adherence to his oath would be rewarded by the gift of a son, it being past belief that he should ever be so far afflicted as to be under the necessity of bringing up a daughter. Having remained absent from home several days, he returned to his wife, with some anxiety as to the result of the birth; and when he was informed that the child was a daughter, and had been suffered to live, and had been nurtured by the mother in compliance with his commands, his fury became ungovernable, and with blasphemous and idle curses against the whole pantheon of Hindooism, he gave orders for the immediate massacre of both the mother and child. When the virulence of his wrath was somewhat assuaged, the life of the mother was spared at the intercession of the Jahrja's eldest son; but no prayers or remonstrances could induce him to spare that of the infant, although according to their own observances, it was extreme cruelty and disgrace to destroy the child, if suffered to live even a few hours after birth. In compliance with the monster's orders, the innocent babe was torn from

its mother's bosom, and strangled in her sight. The circumstance was thus reported to the British authorities, who immediately arrested the Jahrja and brought him to trial. The retribution of the law was however averted by the devoted wife, who gave such evidence as tended to show that the child had died a natural death, but in consequence of contradictory evidence from other witnesses, a trial by ordeal, according to ancient Hindoo usage, was permitted, and the good fortune of the Jahrja acquitted him.

The common reasons assigned for the destruction of the female offspring is the fear of dishonour, and the extravagant outlay necessarily incurred in their marriage: there is no doubt that pride, avarice, and indolence were the true authors and supporters of infanticide; in reality it has been shown, that it forms no part of the Hindoo religion, although it has been found convenient to induce such a belief, and the artful Brahmins themselves may have favoured it. The male offspring are never sacrificed; although there exists in Hindoo history—perhaps I should rather say in Hindoo fable—a very curious account of a race of people exactly resembling, in all their peculiarities, the Amazons of the Greeks. They are said to have inhabited the district of Marawa, upon the coast immediately opposite to the island of Ceylon, and were named Stri-Raja, or women-princes; they destroyed all their male children directly after birth, and excluded all men from their society and their

dominions, beholding only such as were brought to them by accident or adventure, and not permitting even these to dwell more than a few days among them. Not only is this story preserved in several works both Mahommedan and Hindoo, but sculptures of the Amazon *armed and deprived of the right breast* are found in various parts of India. It is quite evident that the two stories have the same origin, and whether we refer the legend to the Euxine and Caspian seas upon the relation of Justin and Diodorus, or whether we take it from the adventures of Kama Rupa, we cannot but suppose that it must have arisen from the fact of some class of persons habitually destroying their male children. It may be worthy of remark that in Marawa at this day there is a race of people called *Kalaris*, robbers by birth and education, with whom the women are regarded as the heads of families, enjoying an extraordinary authority over the men, and being esteemed the lawful partner of the brother, father, uncles, and other relations of the husband, as much as of the husband himself.

I remember to have been particularly struck with the contrast which is observable between the bearing of the Brahmin and that of the other castes of Hindoos towards Europeans, in the great city of Benares. The fulsome adulation and abject servility of the latter recall a passage of Rousseau à d'Alembert; " Les outrager par ces évidens mensonges, n'est ce pas

leur déclarer assez nettement qu'on ne trouve aucune vérité obligéante à leur dire ?" serving at the same time to render more obvious that supercilious and insolent carriage of the Brahmins which only dares to display itself in the very centre of their strength, surrounded with thousands of their fellows to keep them in countenance. It is seldom seen in Calcutta or at stations where themselves are few and the English supported; it is only when the solitary European without state or attendants is surrounded by whole troops of them that they have spirit to display their impatient rancour, even in their looks; and this they have lately learned to suppress, having been taught by a few lessons how great odds the nervous arm and stout courage of the European will encounter, rather than brook even a contemptuous look. Still, if not openly insulting, their demeanour forms a marked contrast to that of the submissive Soodra, with whom patience, endurance, and humility are cardinal virtues. Lest I should give an erroneous impression to those who are not versed in the distinctions of the different castes, I should mention, that all the Brahmins are not necessarily priests, although the priests must be Brahmins. Of the various classes of *jogis* and *fakhirs* whose names figure away, to the sad perplexity of the general reader, in most Indian literature, I have thought it expedient to particularize as little as possible, for the sake of perspicuity.

Should the reader be inclined to accuse me of dwell-

ing too greatly upon the horrible throughout this description, I beg to apologize and to offer my explanation in the following words of the great Burke. "There is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether we are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer."

I might have detailed to the tender-hearted reader various cruel and wanton methods of infanticide practised in other parts of India. For instance, it has been ascertained that in some districts, the inhuman parents have buried their living children up to the throat in the earth, leaving the head exposed to the attacks of the wild beasts and birds of prey; others have been known to bind the poor innocents by the feet to the branch of a tree, there abandoning them to the most horrible of deaths; in some places it has been the practice to hurl them headlong from a height into the waters of a river sacred to one or other of their unholy gods. But these most unnatural atrocities, it is to be hoped, have only been perpetrated, when the treacherous dealings of the priesthood have so powerfully wrought upon the superstitious fears of the natives as altogether to overwhelm the

tide of their parental affections. A somewhat less revolting custom, since a touch of humanity appears still to exist in the misguided parent, is that of setting the infant adrift upon the water in a little ark, such as is described in the Holy Scriptures as the refuge of the infant Moses during the infanticide of the males commanded by Pharoah. The author feels confident that he need make no apology to his readers for displacing a few of his prosaic pages in order to give room to the following stanzas, written by a young lady. He considers them too full of true description to require a word of comment, and as to their poetic merit, let the reader judge.

INFANTICIDE.

How beautiful is morn,
Ere up the curving arch of yon blue sky
The golden chariot of the sun mounts high,
And panting Nature sinks o'erborne,
As captive warriors droop and die
Beneath some conqueror's car of victory!
Lo! from the grateful shade
By spreading tamarinds and rich mango made,
The snowy temple its light dome upreareth;
While scattered here and there,
As though appealing to its guardian care,
The modest Hindoo hut appeareth.
Near to the sacred fane,
O'ershadowed by the *banian's* linked chain

Of leafy boughs unending,
Upshooting, spreading, and descending,
A lakelet, small and clear,
Reflects the emerald-tinted atmosphere.
Around the dark brown trunks gay blossoms creep;
From twig to twig the lively squirrels leap;
Birds of gay plumage and sweet song
The laden branches throng;
And stately peacocks through the long grass move:
Already to their light and graceful toils,
The women gather 'neath the fragrant grove,
Spinning the white line from the fleecy spoils
Of yon rich fields which, far away,
Lie basking in the opening day,
All golden as the beams which o'er them play.
Apart from all—the silver lake beside,
Which mirroreth her charms with eager pride,
What form appears, as motionless and fair,
As marble image wrought by chisel rare;
Graceful as the *areca*, with long hair
Entwined by gems and flowers, and loosely flung
Back from the white and polished brow, which bears
Impress of sorrow, keen and gathering cares,
Unmeet for one so lovely and so young.
Her silken robe of ample fold,
Scarce shows the fairy foot and ancle slender,
Circled by glittering stones and ring of gold;
For earth and sea their spoils surrender,
To deck the wife of Menon bold,
The wealthy and well-born.
Across her bosom, closely drawn,

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Descends her veil in shining folds,
And something to her heart she holds,
Which often with convulsive clasp,
She presses close, and closer still:
Her right hand's rose-tipped fingers grasp
A basket, framed with care and skill,
Of sacred *tulsi* wood, replete
With *tuberose*, and *mogri* sweet,
The *champa* shedding forth perfume,
The rich *mahdavi*'s crimson bloom,
And *amra* heading Camdeo's dart,
To deal a wound that leaves no smart.
As to the breezes cool
The pensile sprays and verdurous foliage shiver,
Their painted brethren as in mockery quiver,
Beneath the glassy surface of the pool:
And there, its glossy leaves around it closing,
The silver lotos floats reposing.
"Even thus, even thus,"—passed through poor Zeida's breast—
"I might have cradled thee to rest,
Calm as the lily on that pearly water;
As safe from storms, as beautiful, as blest;
Woe, woe is me! my daughter! O! my daughter!"

* * * * * *

Vainly she lingers there,
Love wrestling with despair,
Ere through the scorching noon-tide air
The tyrant sun shall proudly ride
Her sacrifice must be complete;
And she, returning with reluctant feet
Again may sit by Menon's side,

And find her consolation, if she can,
In the caress bestowed by flattered pride,
Which oft is deemed and christened *love* in man.
For beautiful is Zeida, and her lord
Knows well to prize and guard so fair a gem—
A richer never shone in Delhi's hoard—
But can he love her, and condemn
That young heart to such agony,
As now each pulse is torturing?
O! could he but that infant see
From its brief slumber just awaking,
Still pillowed on that bosom aching,
Stretching its tiny hands that cling
To the soft neck, as in appeal
For love, for pity, for protection,
Even his proud soul remorse must feel;
He could not crush that young affection,
Nor to the monsters of the flood
His helpless first-born child resign,
Though one of his pure flowing blood
Seeks none but sons to grace his line.

* * * * *

The river rusheth full and strong,
A mighty and majestic stream;—
Yon Chupra it hath swept along,
Stifling the dying scream
Of the wretch that in his lone despair
Waited death's rude summons there.
Where the tall reeds thickly grow,
Nodding slowly to and fro,
Plunges the lordly buffalo;

And near him in close ambuscade
The subtle crocodile is laid;
Like a trunk, bare, leafless, brown,
By the tempest shock o'erthrown,
Moveless on the bank he lies
With glittering and watchful eyes.
Demon of cruelty and fear,
Alas! thy prey is near.

* * * *

Zeida hath laid her basket down,
Her offering to the sacred river;
No tears even yet her eye doth own,
But every feeble limb doth quiver;
And sobs, each like a dying gasp,
Burst from that agonized breast,
To which, with strong and straining clasp,
The hapless babe is pressed.
A smile across its features plays
Unconsciously—and now another,
Answering the miserable gaze
Of that most wretched mother.

* * * * *

A thrill of anguish shook her frame,
Then, a brief frenzy on her came.
The thin veil from her head she tore,
And the poor infant round and round
In the soft gauzy folds she wound,
That soon its struggles might be o'er.
And with quick steps, though each one sank,
In the green oozy river bank,

Down among the reeds she cower'd.
There gently laid the fated child,
And o'er it, from her basket, piled
Green leaves and blossoms shower'd.
Then, pressing both hands to her head,
As if in agony of fear
Its dying shriek to hear,
Nerved by despair, with frenzied speed she fled.

ETTAIAH.

MODERN authors, both the travelled and the merely speculative, who have written to illustrate the Oriental world, have shown us that, marked as is the dissimilitude between the nations of Europe and of Asia in their habits of life, their customs, their religions, forms, complexion, and costume, they are still more strikingly contrasted in their mental peculiarities and distinct habits of thought. It is indeed wonderful to note the unequal estimation with which the minds of millions collectively, in one and the other quarters of the globe, will mutually regard the same object: and perhaps under no circumstances is this more obviously displayed than in the importance which each respectively attaches to events of the past and of the future. To the European in youth, or in the prime of life, there is no pleasure in retrospection, however sweet, that can equal those bright and glorious heart-stirring visions of the future which are the offspring of a san-

guine and ambitious temperament; while, to the less ardent people of the tropics, there exists not in the prospective any measure of delight so full as the calm enjoyment of dreamy recollection; the most glowing promise will often fail to excite, when a glimpse of life by-gone will immediately engross all the faculties. In Europe every active mind is bent upon improvement, the energies are devoted to the aggrandisement of the present, or are absorbed in schemes to foretell and meet the exigencies of the future; few indeed devote their time to constant reflection on the past; and when by chance they are called upon to rehearse the events of former days, their best efforts only prove how necessary practice is to excellence. The contemplative Asiatic will at a moment's notice assemble and renew the faded images of times long past away, and, without effort, paint his picture in such life-like form and colour as to present his audience with a complete reflection of the scene itself. His powers, too, are quickened by being constantly in request, for all Oriental families are addicted to narration, and seldom close the day without one or other reciting some passage from the records of their own lives or the traditions of their forefathers. For the gentle reader's sake I heartily wish I possessed the power of penning my descriptions, or of reciting my legends, with one half the graphic spirit and effect which would be infused into them by these eloquent though unlettered people. With a hope of preserving

as much as possible of the freshness and vigour of the original, I lost no opportunity while I was in India of making memoranda of all the tales, and historical or other information which I gathered from the natives, as nearly as possible in their words. For my own amusement, indeed, I used frequently to note down whole dialogues which I had enjoyed with these story-telling people, and they now serve to carry my memory back to the scene with a truth and nicety which I am confident I could not otherwise have retained. Wherever I am able to do so, I prefer giving the reader the benefit of these living pictures, in preference to dull recital of my own, and in illustration of the present subject I think I shall need no apology for leaving my narration almost entirely in the mouth of my informant. It will however be first necessary for me to clear the stage, to set up my scene, to declare the time and place, and to explain the entrées and exits; this shall be done in as few words as may be.

During a long and tedious voyage down the river Jumna, at a season when the navigation of that river is always difficult and somewhat hazardous, I found my patience rapidly giving way under the influence of a contrary breeze, and shoal waters traversed in all directions with sunken rocks. The scenery around me was wild in the extreme. On either side of its narrow bed the pent up stream was shut in with rough percipitous cliffs, in many places overhanging with perilous menace my nutshell of a skiff. These tower-

ing banks are partially clothed with ragged jungle and dwarf-trees of a most mis-shapen growth; in places they are intersected with deep and dark ravines, which are the impenetrable hiding-places of *thugs*, *dukhaits*, and other classes of banditti; and also of tigers, leopards, hyænas, wolves, and a host of man's natural enemies. The day had been sullen and overcast, and my humour accorded with the scene. I had lounged all day upon the roof of my boat, in idle mood, now gazing on the accumulating clouds, now striving to find excitement in the exploits recorded in the pages of a veteran and not-a-little-mutilated sixpenny pamphlet, entitled "The Bandit's Bride;" but from want of taste or from heartless misanthropy I found myself heartily well disposed to strangle the fair lady for her treachery, and to hang all the outlaws for their crimes.

"Manji," said I, somewhat impatiently, to the boat's captain; "Mangi, lower that abominable top-sail; you have overmasted your miserable boat, and when the squall breaks we shall be capsized." "Pardon your slave, most noble Sir," replied the man, with a profound reverence, "there will be no storm this evening, and I am desirous of showing your greatness the far-famed town of Ettaiah before night falls. There will be no wind."

"Lower the topsail, Sirrah!" Down came the canvass upon deck. I turned my eye to windward; the horizon had become beautifully bright, and a fresh breeze was fast hurrying away the heavy clouds. In

a few seconds, as if by a magic spell, the whole aspect of nature was transformed. A brilliant flood of sunshine was spread across the scene; the cliffs rose still higher and more majestically over our heads; the deep leaden waters were converted into a rippled flood of gold; and as our canvass filled to the favouring breeze, my spirits regained their wonted elasticity.

"Make all sail, you Manji; and here, tell me, what are the glittering buildings which so thickly crown yonder cliffs?"

"That place, Sir, is the famed city of Ettaiah, formerly the capital of this district. It is of very great antiquity, and strange tales are told of its ancient inhabitants. Your honour will find it worthy of a day's tarry."

I instantly ordered out my little wherry, and taking four oars on board, I had rounded the last reach just as the sun touched the horizon. The scene was grand indeed. Buildings of all dates and ages—the ancient and the modern, the ruined and the still unfinished, were heaped together in strange confusion, and were spread over about twenty hills to the height of eighty or a hundred feet above the water-mark.

I landed upon one of the principal *ghâts*, and throwing my gun over my shoulder, I strolled from ruin to ruin, and from street to street, until at last, upon a flight of newly-built steps leading to the water, I descried an aged Brahmin performing his evening worship with his face turned towards the still glowing west.

" Peace, my Son," said I to the old man, who was grey enough for my grandfather, " you appear to be enjoying the freshness of the evening breeze. These are handsome *ghâts ;* your town appears to be rising anew from its dusty ruins. Are there any relics within particularly worthy of the inspection of a foreigner ? "

" Protector of the poor, you may well say that the air is cool ; but how can I be enjoying it ? You are from the west, and love these chilly winds ; you are young, and the piercing air only braces your frame. Alas ! behold me ; youth and activity have flown, and I have nothing wherewith to preserve vital warmth in my frame but this tattered blanket, which is a poor substitute for vigour and warm blood : but it has pleased God to inspire me with infinite fortitude ; or perhaps I may say that I have myself acquired it, during a long life of hardship and exposure."

" Why, my friend, you must indeed be a chilly mortal ; the air is yet glowing with the noon's heat."

" Great Sir, you were pleased to enquire of your slave if there be any thing worth seeing in our city. Why do you apply to me about such toys as these ? Such trifles I regard not ; I am an aged man, and now mine eyes are incessantly turned towards Heaven. If there has ever been any thing in our land worth coveting, you English gentlemen have stripped us of it ; you have sacked our coffers, and have glutted yourselves with our treasure."

" Come, come, my Son, you judge us harshly : we

have conquered your land but to relieve it from the oppression of tyrants; and have taken charge of your wealth only to disburse it for your advantage; and those who evince a grateful sense of our goodness, by endeavouring to serve us to the best of their power, invariably receive some reward at our hands.—Pray what is this singular ruin which surmounts the hill above us?"

"That! 'tis Khoob-soorut's palace: all persons know the story."

"No, I am altogether ignorant of the history of your town; but my *surdar* has orders to supply with three days' subsidy any man who adds a good story to my collection."

"Chosen of Heaven, will it please you to bestow a few minutes' patience while I relate to you the legend of the ruined palace which attracts your attention: there must be few indeed who can tell the tale with better effect than myself; though I do not say this with any wish to persuade you that my story will be worth four days' supply, where others have received three. Be pleased, Sir, to recline upon that white cloth while I rehearse my favourite

"STORY OF BUDDUNAUT AND KHOOB-SOORUT,

which all who listen to declare to be very excellent. Every soul in this town knows it by heart, but there is not one who can recite it like myself; and those who

Engraved by E. Finden,

Ruins at Ithaca

Entered ... 1834 by Charles Tilt ...

have heard my version fifty times over only become the more desirous of hearing it again.

"In days long past what city was so great and glorious as Ettaiah,—her inhabitants, lofty in stature and beautiful in form, stood among their fellow men as the sun in his strength compared with the twinkling stars of heaven. But evil is strong upon earth, and the terrible goddess Kali, working with powerful and malicious influence in the hearts of men, had gradually reduced the proud city to degradation and misery. Truth, justice, industry, domestic peace, and public virtue passed away, like the vernal glories of plain and forest after the clouds of the blue locust have rested upon them. Arts and manufactures were disregarded; sloth and intemperance had paralysed every hand, while poverty and famine roved throughout the city as fierce as *paria* dogs howling for their prey. The control of law had long ceased in Ettaiah; provisions, money, almost all the necessaries of life, were obtained by plunder alone, and as long as any stores remained, they were at the disposal of every strong arm and ferocious spirit who could demand his portion from the general stock, or wrench it from the grasp of a weaker neighbour. When all was gone, the lawless robbers set forth to levy new contributions, lying in wait for luckless travellers in the gloomy ravines that intersect the lofty banks of the Jumna, greedy and watchful as the crocodile lurking in the reedy shallows below them; or rushing on some unprotected village, they robbed

the husbandman of his newly-garnered harvest, the cottage of its frugal stores, and carrying off every portable article of value, left wailing and despair, perchance blood and death, behind.

"The triumph of Kali was now obtained—all the inhabitants of the fallen city had declared themselves her worshippers; evil reigned supreme in Ettaiah, and the very name of the city was held thrice accursed—the knife had reached the very bone.

"Now, the god Krishna, the pure spirit of benevolence, cast his eyes of compassion upon the desolation and misery of this once magnificent city, and resolved by the exercise of his beneficent influence to raise up the fallen from her shame, and set the crown of rejoicing once more upon her head. But in vain he struggled against the wicked passions of men, inflamed by long indulgence and in close alliance with the spirits of evil, until at last he was forced to employ stratagem to effect his good purpose in the reformation of Ettaiah. And first he sent a wasting and terrible pestilence among the people, as a chastisement for their sins, and that any yet lingering principle of good might be awakened in their hearts, even as we crush the *khusha* grass to draw forth its richest perfume. Lamentation and weeping, terror and despair, now filled the streets of the accursed city; mothers saw their infants expire in their arms, and children yet more wretched, houseless and unprotected, shrunk from the livid corpses of their stricken

parents. The warrior in the pride of his iron-knit frame, the young man, strong-limbed and reckless of danger, fell by the venomed arrow that smiteth at noon-day; nor safer were the old men cowering in their desolate homes, nor the damsel on her silken couch, for the destroyer passed by with the sword of vengeance, mowing down strength and weakness, beauty and decrepitude. Woe, woe, to Ettaiah and her sinful inhabitants!

"The only person in the city to whose authority the lawless populace in some degree submitted, was the young chief, Buddunaut, chosen by his fellow citizens to preside over their councils, for his undoubtable courage, great personal beauty, and superior wisdom. Into the heart of this young ruler, Krishna instilled a deep and thrilling conviction of the cause of the fearful calamity now visiting his capital, and soon the thoughts of the crimes and sufferings of his people haunted his couch with all hideous sounds and shapes throughout the night, and by day seemed to rise above and around him like a sulphurous cloud, shutting out the blessed light of heaven, and ready to burst in thunders upon his head.

"The agony of his mind grew beyond endurance, and freshly endued with wise and virtuous resolution by the beneficent Krishna, Buddunaut assembled the people, reproached them with their accumulated crimes, and declared the cause of the pestilence now raging amongst them. By persuasions, exhortations,

and the aid of Krishna, he won over to his side the most powerful and influential of the citizens, and then proceeded to enact salutary and severe laws for the restraint and punishment of vice. His efforts were successful. Good slowly, but surely, drove evil from her stronghold, the pestilence abated, peace and order once more reigned in the city,—penitents thronged the long deserted temples, and Ettaiah was well nigh reclaimed. But the malicious Kali, the unrelenting enemy of man, yielded not so easily her prey; and hopeless of the effects of open force, she resolved to foil the benevolent purpose of Krishna, by a counter stratagem. To tempt is far easier than to compel, and the subtle goddess exerted all her art in framing a woman of such surpassing beauty, that all which poets have sung, or lovers dreamed, should seem faded and dull in comparison with her matchless charms, that the eyes of those who gazed upon her should be henceforth insensible to all other loveliness earth could display, and men become as clay in her hands.

"On this enchantress, having first instilled a due portion of her own vindictive spirit, and fully instructed her in her mission of evil, Kali bestowed the power of invoking effective curses on all who provoked her wrath, or thwarted the will of her terrible patroness.

"Turn now, *Bahádoor Sahib*, and behold those ruins on the lofty hills behind us—they are those of a mag-

nificent palace, which, even in the days we speak of, had fallen to decay, and the name of its first founder oblivion had blotted from the book of the past. During the late awful pestilence it had been used as a lazaretto, and was studiously shunned by all the citizens of Ettaiah, as a sad memorial of the sufferings they had endured. The damp mists of death seemed to cling around its mouldering walls, the wailings of despair to fill the breezes that swept through its lonely courts, and the wayfarer, homeward bound, turned his eyes from the broken outlines of walls and towers cutting the sapphire sky, and praised the god Krishna that it was not with Ettaiah as in her evil days.

"But lo! in the solemn stillness of night, when all within the city were locked in repose, the wicked Kali descended in the form of an enormous vampire, and deposited Khoob-soorut (the beautiful) in one of the vast chambers of the palace.—Then by her magic art she recalled into existence all the ancient splendours of the abode, and surrounded the syren, destined to effect the destruction of Ettaiah, with every species of luxury and magnificence that might aid her own unrivalled beauty in fascinating the minds of men, and seducing them again to the worship of evil.

"The sun arose, and his crimsoned beams illumined the snow white domes and glittering cupolas of the restored palace; and, from the gates of Ettaiah, poured forth an eager crowd to gaze and wonder. Nearer

and nearer they pressed, even to the lofty brazen gates, through whose richly wrought lattice-work glimpses were gained of gardens rivaling the famed paradise of Ahmedabad, of silver fountains, amid beds of roses, of stately trees starred with gorgeous blossoms, through which the soft winds careered joyfully, filling the atmosphere with perfume; while ever and anon clouds of birds, glittering like winged gems rose into the air, and strains of divine music came faintly and at intervals on the ear.

"All gazed and marvelled, and ardently desired to explore the secrets of the mysterious abode, and revel in its garden of delights, but no small degree of courage was required to essay this bold though tempting adventure. The citizens, young and old, gathered in knots, and held sage and long discussions on the matter; but a superstitious awe possessed all their hearts, and throughout seven days only curious glances and anxious wishes were directed towards the palace of Khoob-soorut.

"At length a youth named Bhudroo, of noble birth and gallant spirit, hoping to win both wealth and fame if he accomplished the adventure, stole from his home at the first peep of dawn and ascended the hill crowned by the palace. The brazen gates unfolded at his approach, and stepping over the threshold he seemed at once to breathe a new and delicious atmosphere, the very air was perfumed, and the flowers shed rays of light from their rainbow-tinted

petals. Led by an irresistible impulse, dazzled and bewildered, the young adventurer crossed the marble courts, and entered a vast circular hall in the palace. Twelve pillars of crystal supported the lofty roof, wrought in purple and silver to mimic the glories of the summer night, the floor was inlaid with chrysolyte; and the curving walls sparkled with innumerable gems: but far outshining all, at the farther end of the hall sat Khoob-soorut on a throne of ivory, in aspect gentle and innocent as a pearl newly drawn from the green waters of Oman.

"Nor her loveliness alone, but the witchery of her smile and the honey-sweet accents of her voice, sank deep into the heart of the young Bhudroo, who, bewildered with joy, overwhelmed with astonishment and admiration, lay, as if entranced, at the feet of the enchantress.

"Her choicest spells were exercised to ensnare and secure her prey, and body and soul were nearly won, when to the offer of her hand in marriage and all the untold wealth contained within her palace, she annexed the startling condition, that he should aid her in bringing back the city of Ettaiah to the worship of Kali. The heart of the enamoured youth sank within him. Darkly,—yet too sensibly, came back upon his soul, the days of anarchy, the woes of famine and pestilence, endured by his fellow-citizens, while under the wrath of Krishna. How dare he risk the renewal of these horrors! Firmly, though

slowly, he assured the dangerous syren, whose eyes of beauty now rested upon him with a stern and terrible glance, that in this dread task alone he hesitated to obey her; in all others, were death itself the penalty incurred, he was her devoted and ready slave. Scarcely had the words left his lips when Khoob-soorut, rising from her throne, uttered two words of tremendous *malison*, and pointing towards him her white and taper finger, that form of beauty and grace vanished for ever and ever from the gaze of the hapless Bhudroo; for his eyes had withered in their sockets. Then warning him that instant death would be his doom if ever he revealed the cause or manner of his misfortune, she bade him begone from her palace.

"The agonized youth strove to escape from the fatal abode, but darkling and bewildered he wandered for hours amid the enchanted halls and tangled labyrinths of that delusive paradise, the fierce arrows of the sun bursting upon his head, and the hiss of venomed reptiles making his blood run cold as he stumbled along, knowing not what hidden danger lurked in his path. The song of birds, the scent of flowers, were no longer manifest to his senses; but the fiendish laugh of the cruel Khoob-soorut rang unceasingly in his ears. It was night-fall ere, exhausted, blind, and despairing, he reached his home.

"The unfortunate Bhudroo languished in obscurity, none knowing the cause of his affliction, while the

wicked Kali, exciting a fierce thirst for wealth in the bosoms of the young men of Ettaiah, by awakening their avarice vanquished their scruples and their fears, and day by day provided new victims for Khoob-soorut. Some of these rash adventurers, who had penetrated into the fatal palace in the hopes of attaining unbounded wealth, returned with their sight or speech destroyed; the teeth of some became brass, the limbs of others marble, the rest were gibbering idiots, or frantic madmen;—yet none dared to reveal the true cause of his misfortune; and terror and doubt anew possessed the city of Ettaiah. At length the virtuous Buddunaut unable to restrain the fatal curiosity of his people, and filled with pity for the strange and awful bereavements thereby incurred, assembled the whole train of maimed and blighted sufferers before the great Temple of Krishna, and endeavoured to elicit a confession which should discover the cause of that god's displeasure.

"His exhortations and menaces were answered by tears and lamentations, but none dare breathe the name, nor detail the fiendish malice of Khoob-soorut. Then Buddunaut retired within the temple, and there, assisted by the principal Brahmins, he performed solemn rites in honour of the god, and adjured him to reveal the cause of his wrath, and why the furnace of affliction was anew kindled to devour his wretched people.

"While thus employed the blind Bhudroo, first victim of Khoob-soorut, stepped forth from the multitude and cried aloud—

"'Hear me, O! most noble Buddunaut—in early childhood we were friends, and like to brothers, and for love of thee, and to restore peace to thy city, I will reveal the cause of my present affliction, though death itself be the penalty. In yonder palace dwells a false enchantress, sent by the terrible goddess Kali to win back your people to her worship, or to exterminate the whole race amid tortures such as we have suffered.

"'The vain love of praise, and the accursed desire of wealth, first lured me within yon fatal walls. The sorceress is more beautiful than day; who can stand before her?—

"'But beware, O! beware, ye who are yet unscathed take warning, my fellow citizens, danger and death lurk like serpents amid her seeming paradise, her smile is ruin, and her loveliness a lure into the paths of destruction—O! fly, then, the haunts of the dedeceiver.'—He stretched forth his arms imploringly to his companions, a livid hue overspread his face, and sinking at the feet of Buddunaut, he expired in horrible convulsions.

"Great was the dismay of the spectators—they threw themselves upon the ground, tore their garments, and cast dust upon their heads, cursing the evil fate that had come upon themselves and their

children, for verily it appeared that the contest between the powers of evil and good would end only in the destruction of Ettaiah, and of all its wretched inhabitants. Nor was the piteous tumult appeased, until the youthful chief Buddunaut with all the grace and dignity of superior virtue, thus addressed his subjects:—

"'Take courage,' he said, 'my unhappy people—return in peace to your homes, the sun shall not again rise and set ere this enchantment be dissolved, even though your safety be only purchased by my life.'

"Relying upon this noble promise, the affrighted citizens slowly withdrew to their houses, praising the self-devotion of their chief, and invoking for him the aid and protection of Krishna; while the chief Brahmins and astrologers busied themselves within the temples to ascertain the auspicious moment when Buddunaut should commence the adventure.

"The prosperous conjunction of the heavenly signs denoted the pure and solemn hour before dawn, and Buddunaut full of zeal and courage, robed in regal attire, and attended by a numerous train of priests and nobles, climbed the rugged hill, and then bidding adieu to his followers crossed the fatal threshold alone.

"The people of Ettaiah assembling in crowds, stood upon the sides of the hill and along the banks of the river, their eyes fixed upon the lofty walls and shining towers within whose precincts their beloved chief had ventured. The hours sped on—no food had entered

their lips, no shelter had they from the blazing sun; the Brahmins offered sacrifices, and pious devotees muttered unceasing prayers, but still Buddunaut came not. Towards noon a burst of triumphant music came swelling forth upon the air from the interior of the palace, and songs of rejoicing and loud shouts of frantic merriment startled the ears of the anxious citizens. These continued at frequent intervals; but they heralded not the return of the adventurous chief, and towards sunset some of the boldest among the people consulted together if they should not force an entrance into the mysterious palace, and discover whether the mad strains of revelry proceeding from thence celebrated the triumph of their prince, or that of the terrible Kali. A chosen body of brave young men stood forward to prosecute this adventure, when lo! on the marble terrace which roofed the palace Buddunaut at length appeared.

"Alas for the pride of man! A murmur of horror and dismay ran through the multitude; for behold the generous and heroic chief, a few hours before the model of manly grace and beauty, stood before them a blighted and distorted being, a monster of humanity, unrecognizable save by his jewelled crown, his royal robes, and the broad scar upon his brow, token of his days of glory and his prowess in battle. With hollow and discordant voice he addressed the assembly;—

"'My devoted subjects—fellow worshippers of the divine Kali, behold your chief, whose eyes are now

opened to see the fault he has committed in so long refusing his allegiance to that great and powerful goddess. Come, prostrate yourselves at her shrine; offer to her your dutiful vows, and then return to your homes and revel in all luxury and delight. Away with the wild shackles of law, let each man do that which is right in his own eyes: the world is wide enough for all, and the pleasures it contains are many and varied as the pebbles on the sea shore. Let us then eat, drink, and be merry: your monarch shall set you the example—Lo! I have chosen my queen, my bride, more lovely than the full-orbed moon; and for myself—if your fond love praised my strength and stature before, behold how glorious am I now!'—and the degraded chief in his frantic delusion raised up to its full height his withered and mis-shapen form, as if to challenge the admiration of the awe-stricken multitude, who hid their eyes from a sight so dreadful. Even at this moment, a little snake, glittering in scarlet and gold, and scarce thicker than a man's finger, wound itself up from a small crevice in the tesselated floor, and suddenly expanding to an enormous size, enfolded the hapless Buddunaut in its terrible coils, and instantly crushed him to death.

"The fierce reptile then flung forward its gigantic body, levelled the brazen gates, and darting like a scorching meteor through the magic groves entered the palace.

"While the citizens of Ettaiah stood paralyzed with

terror a dense and lurid cloud overspread the sky—thunders bellowed around—the mountain shook to its base—and a piercing cry from the shattered palace of Khoob-soorut seemed to rend the heavens.

"The enchantment was dispelled—Krishna in the form of a serpent had triumphed at last over his enemy Kali;—the sorceress Koob-soorut was destroyed, and yonder you behold the palace, wherein her magic snares were spread, again reduced to a heap of ruins, and mouldering beneath the heavy hand of time."

AGRA.

THE FORT.—THE MOTI MUSJID.

It is often very difficult, nay impossible, to discover, by the unmoved countenance and manner of the Mussulman, how far he is sincere or ironical in his allusions to the British power and the altered state of government, in those rich territories which were lately the crown lands of the Mogul Emperors. When I was exploring the ruins of Agra, about three years since, a very handsome young Mussulman—who had proved himself equally intelligent and well informed, by resolving a number of questions which I put to him about the different buildings, and their former occupants—somewhat perplexed me by the following reply to my remarks upon the changes which had taken place in the renowned capitals of Delhi and Agra. There was no movement of the eye or mouth, no intonation of voice, which could be supposed to interpret the man's equivocal speech.

"Let those who are sheltered in mercy," said he, alluding to the deceased kings of the Mogul dynasty, who by Mussulmans are never spoken of as being dead in other terms than these; "Let those who are sheltered in mercy, whose seat is in Paradise, behold how the mighty men of all India, the descendants of a thousand emperors, have exchanged turbans* with your victorious and peace-dispensing countrymen; the proud chiefs, the children of the true prophet, the chosen of heaven, the invincible, delighting in benevolence and good faith, have made themselves joyful in an act of brotherly affection, by sharing with the English the glories and riches of their thrones. Otherwise, they had been content to resign their power altogether into the hands of this noble race of strangers, whom Alla was pleased to select as instruments to save the whole country from destruction. *Is it not true, Sir, that the chiefs of royalty have had pleasure in descending from their kingly state, to grind rice for princely infidels?*" † Throughout this sentence, as I received it, the light and shade of profound respect and insolence, of submission and reproach, played to and fro in so shifting and chequered a manner, that I was quite unable to define the man's real meaning; nor could I ascertain it by farther questions.

* The most sacred and inviolable token of friendship and peace among all oriental nations.

† "To grind rice for infidels," is an expression betokening the utmost degradation to which a Mussulman can be brought.

The Fort of Agra.

London, Published Jan.1 1833 by Charles Tilt, 86, Fleet Street.

While we were gazing upon the beautiful ruins of the white marble pavilion in the palace, he quoted the following lines from the poet Sadi :—

" The spider hath woven his web in the royal palace of the Cæsars;
The owl standeth centinel on the watch towers of Afrasiab."

The fort of Agra is a most imposing object, upon whichever side it is viewed. The lofty towers and high embattled walls rise one above another, to a tremendous height, giving it the appearance of a gigantic castle, reared from a foundation upon the plain; while in truth, it consists of a succession of fortifications, built in, or upon, the rocky front of a high precipice. walls are, in some places, surmounted with handsome domes of marble, or of gilt copper, and upon the front facing the Jumna, the elegant white marble pavilions of the palace overlook the works. The walls of the body of the place are still kept in excellent repair by the Government, while the outer ditch and out-works have been suffered to go to decay. But I must not occupy my narrow space with wide descriptions or with historical detail; daily writers are saving me the necessity. Who does not now know, what nobody knew fifty years since, that Agra was raised from a village to a most magnificent city by the Emperor Akbar, and by him called Akbar-abad. Who does not know that the fort was considered impregnable until taken by Lord Lake, in 1803; that it floated in blood during the reign of Aurung-

zebe, and during each successive reign, until it came into the possession of the English; that its domes of pure gold have been induced to make the voyage to England; that the marble palaces and tesselated halls have been converted into store-rooms? Who does not know that both Delhi and Agra, the first and second capitals of the most powerful and glorious empire of the East, are now little better than a heap of ruins, without trade—without a show of royalty? But to those who have looked upon these magnificent relics of oriental grandeur there is no treat so great as talking or writing of them: it is with great self-denial that I refrain from telling my tale throughout, and turning over again my whole budget of information upon the subject; especially when I alight upon some favorite object of admiration. Thus, kind reader, if I should ever weary you by my prosaic descriptions, I trust I may claim some sympathy in my overfond dilation of the scene. The poet Sadi makes the lover apologize for his wearisome rhapsodies, in the following beautiful strain. "My companion oft reproaches me for my love, will he never behold her charms, that my excuse may be accepted? Would to heaven that they who blame me for my passion could see thy face, oh, thou ravisher of hearts! that at the sight of thee, they might be confounded, and inadvertently cut their heads instead of the fruit which they hold, thou hast no compassion for my disorder: my companion should be afflicted

with the same malady, that I might sit all day, repeating my tale to him; for two pieces of wood burn together with a brighter flame: while thy mind is not affected like mine, the relation of my story seems to be only an idle tale." In bespeaking the interest of the reader, I do not exactly wish with Sadi, that he may become so absorbed in my effusion as inadvertently to do himself an injury, but I am certainly desirous he should be so far sensible of the beauty and grandeur of the scenes described as will enable him to enter with full relish into the stories or legends attached to them.

In Lucian, the immortal Homer is made to avow that he commenced his book with the word Μῆνιν, simply because it was the most convenient word which presented itself to him; and he is represented as laughing to scorn the penetration of the critic, who professed to have discovered in that single word an epitome of the whole poem. I certainly am under no apprehension lest any critic, however profound, should pretend to read the events of the conclusion in the pages which open my description of Agra; but while I plead guilty of having seized and committed to paper whatever offered itself with the best promise of accommodation, I trust that these random words will be found not altogether irrelevant.

The Moti Musjid, or Pearl Mosque, is the most beautiful and attractive building within the fort of Agra. While the British Government have not be-

sitated to appropriate the costly halls of the regal palace for ammunition stores and magazines; they have displayed sufficient good taste and regard for the religious feelings of the Mussulmans to preserve sacred and untouched this most elegant place of worship. It receives its name from the material of which it is constructed, being entirely of white marble, highly polished, and which, under the dazzling rays of a torrid sun, has in truth all the appearance of pearl. It stands nearly in the centre of the citadel, and forms a most enticing object of admiration amid the tottering and prostrate ruins of noble architecture all round it; but the exterior view of it gives but a faint foretaste of the exceeding symmetry and exquisite finish of the work within. It has all the air of fairy architecture, and carries imagination back to those shadowy images which in childhood we had endeavoured to embody from the glowing pages of the Arabian Nights.

No sooner has the beholder passed the arched doors and entered upon the terraced quadrangle, than he finds himself shut in on all sides with walls of the purest white marble, delicately carved, and built in chaste and symmetrical proportion. The eye has nothing but this radiant material to rest upon except the blue vault of heaven above, and its reflection in the basin of holy water in the centre of the court. A beautiful arcade runs round three sides of this area, and on the fourth side is the Musjid itself—the holy house of prayer. The design of this

is exceedingly elegant; many artists and other able critics have declared it one of the most perfect specimens of symmetry extant in oriental architecture. The front consists of seven beautiful arches overhung with a broad canopy; the centre is crowned with a large and nobly proportioned dome, with one on either side considerably smaller, and on the extremities of the façade are two small pavilions. A few shallow steps lead up to the interior, which is supported by pillars of the same fashion as those without, and vaulted with intersecting arches of a corresponding form; facing the centre arch is the *táhk*, or sacred niche, in which a copy of the Koran is always deposited while service is being performed; and on either side under the second arch is a small pulpit, also of white marble. An air of solemn grandeur reigns throughout the whole building; but that which particularly delights the eye and the heart is the supernatural purity and spotless lustre of the entire structure.

After a surfeit of admiration, the question naturally occurs, by whose refined taste and critical skill was this exquisite gem designed? The architect was the princely but unfortunate Emperor Shah Jehan, whose mild and generous disposition offered a temptation to his crafty and ambitious son, Aurungzebe, to dethrone and imprison his royal father, and usurp his dominions. A quotation of my own words,* if I

* See First Impressions and Studies from Nature in Hindostan. London, Allen and Co., 1837.

may be permitted the liberty, will tell sufficient of his history very briefly. He came to the throne by the death of his father in 1628. "Shah Jehan was an amiable and wise prince, universally beloved by his subjects, and a very pattern of excellence in private life. He had four sons, who, with one exception, the crafty Aurungzebe, followed in their father's steps, and imitated his virtues. Aurungzebe, however, proved himself a man of a very different disposition—subtle, wily, and selfish;—and upon him the father found it necessary to keep a strict curb and an ever watchful eye. But even this vigilance was insufficient to frustrate his deep-laid schemes of treason. After several abortive attempts to seize the reins of empire from his father's hands, he threw off the character of a prince, and under the pretext of expiating his crimes, he habited himself as a *fahkir*, and in that guise travelled all the way into the Deccan; there by the incessant exertion of bribery, promises, and persuasions, he levied a large army, and marched against the imperial city of his father, seizing an opportunity while the officers of state were engaged in another quarter. By an extraordinary concurrence of good fortune and skill, and by an inexplicable agency, wherein artifice and duplicity were his chief aids, he at last gained footing within the capital, and secured the persons of his father and one of his elder brothers: the other two being absent from Agra, upon an expedition, remained at large, and being at the time furnished with troops, made head against the

usurper, but without avail." The treacherous and heartless son now incarcerated the Emperor his father within the walls of his own fortress of Agra, with the assurance that death alone would free him from his confinement.

The dethroned Emperor was not, however, altogether without consolation in his imprisonment. He survived his downfal about seven years, during which period he was tenderly cheered and supported by the companionship of his favourite daughter, the celebrated Begum Jehanari, who displayed the fulness of her filial affection by voluntarily sharing her father's fallen state and loss of liberty. History describes this extraordinary princess as being of surpassing beauty, and no less distinguished by her excellent wit, her never-failing courage, and a benevolence of heart which was only equalled by her virtue and constancy. The freshness of her youth was devoted to the consolation of her spirit-broken father, and to the study of science and elegant literature; while the extent of her religious knowledge and experience is the favorite theme of her admiring historians. The building of the Moti Musjid is said to have been suggested by this lovely princess to her father, "with the double motive of diverting his mind from his afflictions, and of raising a memorial of his piety which should not only induce others to follow his holy mode of life, but furnish them with the opportunity of performing their religious obligations."*

* Ferishta's History.

A knowledge of the origin of this Musjid cannot fail to add greatly to the interest with which we regard it. I was myself the more charmed when put in possession of these facts, since I remembered having seen and greatly admired the tomb of this illustrious Begum Jehanari at Delhi not many months previously, and having listened to the enthusiastic strains of praise with which a native interlarded passages of her history.

From the peculiar and very chaste style of her tomb, I should think it not improbable that this princess had designed it herself; for it is a constant practice of Mohummedan chiefs to build their own mausoleums during their life time. It consists of a very elegant white marble sarcophagus, open at the top so as to form a receptacle for mould in which flowers might be planted; it is delicately ornamented with sculptured flowers, and a border of inlaid gems, but all in a very simple style. Upon a polished tablet at the upper end is an elegant inscription in Persian characters, very finely carved and inlaid in jet;—

بجز کیاہ وسبزي کسي نپوشد مزار مرا
که قبرپوش غریان همه کیاه وبس
۱۰۹۴

العانیت حمان ارا بکیم نبت شاه جهان مرید خواجه

which, being interpreted, signifies—

"Let not any person decorate my tomb with any other thing than earth and flowers, for these are fittest for the resting place of a holy spirit.

"1094.*

"The perishable pilgrim, Jehanari Begum, the daughter of Shah Jehan, and a disciple of the Sainted Tchisti."

But to return from Delhi to the Moti Musjid; instead of attempting any farther description in words, I think I need make no apology for referring the gentle reader to the frontispiece of the volume, which has been very cleverly and carefully drawn by Mr. Roberts from my sketch, and which presents as faithful an idea of the building as it is possible to convey by art. When after a long walk spent in admiration of this truly beautiful building, I turned from the gate half blinded with the sparkling glitter of all around me, I could not resist the temptation of endeavouring to learn something more about Begum Jehanari from my intelligent young friend the Mussulman; but I found he could not indulge me.

"Ah!" said the young fellow, with an audible sigh and a somewhat lack-a-daisical air; "Ah, Great Sir, what will not devoted woman do for the man she loves?"

"Aye! or a daughter for her father?" said I.

"That is very true, Sir; the Begum was Shah Jehan's daughter; but your honour, to whom every thing is well known, must be familiar with that wise

* Of the Hijera.

saying which is constantly in the mouths of those who read the poets. 'A devoted stranger is more dear than a neglectful relation; but an unkind kinsman is less esteemed than an utter stranger;' nor is the Hindoo story of

KING SADRAK AND HIS DEWAN

unknown to your excellence." I declared my ignorance and my desire for light, and the talkative youth, without farther introduction, commenced his tale, while I seated myself on the shady side of an embrasure overlooking the Jumna.

In ancient times there lived a Raja, by name Sadrak, in a magnificent palace overlooking the waters of the Brahma-pootra; he was a person of great wealth, and of equal charity, so that none who left their slippers at his door had cause for regret. In all things was this Raja fortunate except in one; he had an only son, who, having thrice conspired against his father's life, was for ever banished his dominions. At the gate of this hospitable chief there resided a venerable *dewan,* * who was the dispenser of his lord's welcome to all who deserved his hospitality, but it was also his duty to see that no rogues or plunderers were admitted. Now this trusty servant had filled his office during three generations of the Raja's family; and, by reason of his extreme age, was becoming daily less able to discharge, with due activity and discretion, the duties

* *Dewan,* a door keeper, an office of trust and of consequence in the East.

of his post; and, through this failing of his mind and body, great evil befel King Sadrak; for daily depredations were committed upon his property by the hands of the *choars* and *dukhaits*, who had little difficulty in gaining access to the treasure.

Now the King being greatly incensed by these ungrateful requitals of his bounty, called upon his slave the *dewan*. "Oh, *dewan!*" said he, "have not you and your children eaten my salt during many years; have not your infants become strong men and valiant through my nourishment; are they not honorably advanced in my service?" But when the old man made answer to the Raja, the chief discovered that, by the lapse of years, the strength and intelligence of his officer had subsided into a second infancy. With much concern the Raja endeavoured to convince himself that this was not the truth; but the more he enquired of the aged *dewan*, the more folly did he encounter; until at last, wearied and sore at heart, he motioned him to depart. And as he withdrew, making his usual obeisance, the King, lamenting his loss, by chance exclaimed aloud, "Ah! woe is me, who now shall sit at my gate to keep guard over my palace and to regard those who come and depart upon my charity!" Whereupon the spirit of wisdom again lighted up the eyes and venerable countenance of his aged slave, who, with deep submission returning to the presence, exclaimed;

"Oh, most potent prince! is it *not wisely* written that under a severe taskmaster the services of a slave are cast away? If he remain in silence he is despised

as a fool; if he should become eloquent he is reviled as a madman and a prattler; if he be ever at his lord's beck he is declared to be an artful and designing knave; if he stand at a distance he is deemed slothful; if patient and submissive he is abused as a coward; if unable to endure abuse he is said to be an upstart and rebellious. Great King, the path of a slave under such a tyrant is indeed difficult and not to be performed even by a saint. But what need of endurance has there been on the part of your mightiness' slave? has he not been overloaded with favors? and now, that he is about to drink the sherbet of dissolution, what chance remains to him of proving his fidelity and gratitude? But oh, my master! be not apprehensive lest a servant less devoted should occupy the entrance to your palace. It is not unknown to your excellence that, as long as your slave has dwelt in the gate, his labors have been shared, and his moments of repose have been enlightened, by the presence of the beautiful Luchmi, the goddess of prosperity, who has thought it bliss to become the servant of so great and wise a prince. Behold, she shall supply the departure of your slave with one equally worthy of your confidence!" Having thus spoken, the *dewan* made his reverence and withdrew.

In a short time there stood before the entrance of the palace a traveller, toil-worn, and having his powerful limbs subdued by fatigue. "Oh *dewan*," cried he, "I am but now arrived at your palace from a far-distant land, and, having left my wife and child in

the city, I have not taken repose before I seek the presence of King Sadrak. I am a Rajhpoot, my name is Behrid; admit me to the presence."

With permission, the traveller was shortly presented to the Raja, and with reverence spoke; "Behold, oh King, I am a stranger in these parts, but in a far-off country, having heard of the fame of your mightiness' wisdom and great virtues, and of the depredations of certain marauding ingrates who have abused your honor's hospitality, I have travelled day and night to offer my services to your majesty."

Now King Sadrak, being a prudent as well as a generous prince, enquired, "What salary dost thou expect?"

"Be not wroth nor surprised, oh King, that I demand for my service four hundred pieces of gold daily."

"Truly," replied the monarch, with a smile, "it is evident that the most disinterested admiration of my many excellent qualities drew thee to my foot-stool. Thy excessive modesty is thy best fortune. Doubtless thy craft is one of great skill and ingenuity; with what tools dost thou exercise thy cunning?"

"Most illustrious Raja, my tools are the best part of my calling; they are three in number; my two arms and my sabre."

"And for such costly trade thou art content to demand so small a pittance as four hundred pieces of gold daily; this over-diffident estimation of thy

deserts proves thee a fool. *Dewan,*" added King Sadrak, "let this stranger depart as he came!"

But here the chief vizier ventured to interpose. "Oh Prince," said he apart, "let not this traveller be thus repulsed, I cannot but think that there is excellence in him. May your highness be pleased to grant him his exorbitant claim but for a few days, and when he is proved, it will be in your power to discharge him, or to retain him upon such stipend as may be proportionate to his merits. Let it please your majesty to place him as *dewan* within the gate, and let a continual watch be placed upon his actions!" This speech pleased the Raja greatly, and having bestowed some mark of favour upon the stranger, he admitted him to his service with the salary of four hundred pieces of gold daily.

Having received his commission, the traveller brought his wife and child to the gate of the palace, but it was remarked that he would not suffer them to dwell in the gate, nor to sport in the shadow of it; neither would he render any explanation of this fanciful proceeding; but with his own hands he built them a small hut, without the gate, at the foot of a large tomb. No sooner had this Rajhpoot become established in his office than the former *dewan* was carried to the water and expired; but while all the household mourned his loss they could not but be sensible that his place was excellently well filled. In a very few days it became evident, that the Rajhpoot was a man of no common ability and

discernment; his inferiors respected, and his superiors admired him, for his zeal and his discretion; nor did the Raja think fit to reduce his salary honestly confessing that his services were even undervalued: and it was apparent that avarice formed no blemish in the man's character, for daily when his money was disbursed from the treasury, without ostentation, he devoted one half of it to the gods and to the Brahmins, distributed one quarter to the poor, and the remainder he reserved for himself. In his duties he was never failing, in his good works he was constant. Day and night he continued at the palace gate, having his sword in his hand; he was just to all men, but over-indulgent to none. Thus during many years he continued to serve the Raja.

As the Rajhpoot was esteemed among all who knew him, so his son became even more greatly the object of affection and regard. Handsome of person, as he grew towards manhood he was equally remarkable for his amiable and elegant deportment; and it was fully expected by all that the Raja would place him in some post of honor and confidence about his royal person, as soon as his education was complete. But about this time the following event took place.

Upon the fourteenth day of the averted moon, the city of king Sadrak was visited with a fearful earthquake; and at midnight the raging winds shook the lofty towers of the castle, and the glancing lightnings sported from dome to minaret of the palace, while the massive walls trembled to the rolling thunder.

Now, contrary to his custom, the Rajhpoot, pitying the alarm of his wife, while exposed in the humble hut to the terrors of the hurricane, had admitted her with his son to shelter within the chambers of the gate; and as they sat conversing, while the storm was at its utmost, there was heard at the gate a mournful cry, and the trembling accents of weeping and lamentation. Then cried the *dewan*, 'Who stands without?' but receiving no answer, he opened the gate, and sought whence the voice had come, but could discover no one. Having made diligent search they became greatly amazed, for whenever the *dewan* closed the gate, the same melancholy wailings were renewed.

Then the *dewan* sent his son to inform the Raja of these strange things, who having come to the gate in person, and having satisfied himself of the truth of those lamentable sounds, commanded the Rajhpoot to go forth and seek the author of them, and never to return into his presence until he was fully informed of every thing concerning them. With humble respect the *dewan* immediately obeyed his lord's command, and went forth; but no sooner had he departed than the king, thinking within himself that he had not done wisely in sending a single man unsupported upon such a service, drew his scimitar and followed him out of the gate directly, charging Behrid's son to open the gate unto none save themselves. But king Sadrak was unable to find the *dewan*, he having

entered the tomb at the foot of which he had built his little hut.

While he was anxiously pursuing his search among the ruins, Behrid suddenly found himself in the presence of a most lovely damsel, exceedingly young and graceful, the radiant splendour of whose countenance shed a bright light throughout the vaulted apartment. The *dewan* fell upon his face before the exquisite beauty; "Oh, Luchmi!" cried he, "most glorious goddess of felicity, wherefore dost thou thus mourn and lament?"

"Ah, miserable Behrid," replied the goddess, "hast thou forgotten my commands? hast thou not expelled me from my abode in the gateway of King Sadrak, by bringing into my presence thy disgraced wife, whose life was dearer to thee than her honour. Miserable man, thou art the ruin of the noble prince who has so generously sheltered and befriended thee. In consequence of thy crime, am I compelled to withdraw my favour and protection from the palace of the king."

Behrid trembled with fear, and his whole frame became distended with remorse; he uttered a stifled groan, and buried his face in the dust, as he sobbed forth,—"Oh, thou most redoubtable Goddess! may not the extreme contrition of thy slave be displayed, and thy favour be regained for my lord the king by the voluntary sacrifice of thy slave's life?"

"Nay, thou faithless miscreant," replied the god-

dess, "of what account is thy sullied life? to whom would it be acceptable? But mark me, in the purity and perfection of thy son's soul could I find pleasure; him will I condescend to receive as an atonement;" and having uttered these words the goddess vanished. Hereupon the penitent Behrid rose from the earth, and taking his sabre, returned to the gate, where, in the presence of his wife, he declared to his son all that had befallen him.

Then his son, rising with a smile of rapture on his lips, bowed his head and exclaimed:—"Fortunate indeed am I become, Oh father, that I am thus selected to re-establish the prosperity of King Sadrak, our most noble prince. Strike, my father, for in truth I am rejoiced thus to quit life."

"Let me embrace thee, mine only one," cried the weeping mother, "and now farewell,—what less can we do? Strike, Behrid!"

Then the *dewan* drew his sword, and at one blow struck off the head of his son, and as the lifeless trunk rolled heavily upon the ground he thus spoke: "Here indeed is a full atonement for my folly, and a proof of my devotion to my lord's cause: but having destroyed my only child, what comfort remains to me? assuredly my life is a fruitless burden." Thus having said, he raised his sword, still warm with the blood of his son, and plunged it into his own heart. Beholding this, the wife and mother felt her spirit die within her, and taking the

dagger from her husband's girdle, she was about to liberate her soul, when King Sadrak returned, and inquired the meaning of this bloody spectacle. She informed him fully of all that had passed, and immediately buried the dagger in her bosom.

"The noble monarch, looking with the deepest regret and admiration upon the prostrate corpses of these devoted servants, was penetrated to the soul with anguish, and proudly exclaiming, "Thus to die is glory," he unsheathed his scimitar, and was about to put an end to his life, when the goddess Luchmi,

> "Daughter of Ocean and primeval Night,
> Who fed with moonbeams dropping silver dew,
> And cradled in a wild wave dancing light,
> Saw with a smile new shores and creatures new,"*

descended before him, and the weapon remained suspended.

"Stay thy hand," said the goddess, in a voice of mercy, "is not this sufficient? I will renew my guard over thy reign, and again thou shalt prosper."

"Oh, goddess," cried the king, falling prostrate, "wherefore should my hand be stayed, when my life has become hateful to me, and my kingdom a burden? If thou regardest my devotion, command that these my servants be restored to animation, and let my worthless life be taken in exchange."

"Enough," said Luchmi, "I am fully satisfied with

* Hymn to Luchmi, translated from the Sanskrit, by Sir W. Jones.

thy piety, and thy generous affection for thy servants; be thou for ever prosperous, and receive the obeisance of thy slaves." On these words the prostrate bodies of Behrid, his wife, and son, became re-animated, and arose to pay homage to the deity, but she had vanished, and the King had returned to his chamber.

Now when morning was come, and the Raja was present in the assembly of his counsellors and chief ministers, he sent for the *dewan*, and inquired of him whence arose the disturbance in the night time; and Behrid being uninformed of what his wife had declared unto the king, was desirous of concealing his merit, and replied, "Oh, King! an unfortunate female wept, but she has departed on her way."

Then the King was greatly pleased, and said aloud before the council, "How can this most virtuous servant be sufficiently rewarded?" and having related his history to the chiefs there assembled, he with his own hand adjusted upon Behrid's person a most princely *khilat* (dress of honor) which he had ordered to be prepared. Then he bestowed upon him one fourth part of his territory, and made his son heir to his entire dominions.

Wherefore then is it not apparent that "a devoted stranger is more dear than a neglectful relation; but an unkind kinsman is less esteemed than an utter stranger?" There is also another saying,—"In peril is a friend proved, in battle a hero, in wealth a religious person, a wise man in poverty, in calamity a kinsman."

DEIG.

SHRINE OF MOHUMMED KAHN.

THE fortress of Deig is about sixty miles north-west from Agra, upon an eminence in the Bhurtpore range of hills. It is said to be of very great antiquity, though it was but a humble fortification before it was rebuilt by the great Emperor Akbur. A curious legend is told of this place, and made to assume the importance of history by the support of Abul Fazil, to the effect that after a very elegant and extensive city had been completed on this spot by the Emperor, it was suddenly swallowed up by an earthquake, together with all its unfortunate inhabitants. Certain it is that for very many years, the place, having become a heap of ruins, was utterly abandoned and shunned with superstitious awe by the people of those parts. In 1760, however, Suraj Muhl, the Jhat Raja, found a few cottages inhabited upon the spot, and these he soon converted into a fortified town for the occupation of his troops, who, some years afterwards having become dis-

affected, treacherously conspired to place it in the hand of the insurgent Neujif Khan. In 1787, however, it was re-captured by the Jhats, and by them occupied until it fell before the besieging army of Lord Lake, in 1805. The place is now little more than a town of ruin and desolation, for the inhabited part of it forms by far the smaller portion. Some of these remains are equal in beauty to any that are to be found in Delhi or Agra, and though, chiefly of the same era, are singularly varied in their style and design.

It is quite laughable to behold with what uneasy jealousy the natives, especially the lower orders, universally regard the movements of the exploring European as he clambers from ruin to ruin, from tomb to banquet-hall; and at first the inexperienced lover of antiquities is at a loss to account for the persevering assiduity with which his steps are dogged and his actions watched by these intruders upon his privacy. He cannot long remain in ignorance of the cause of this persecution; for after having delighted his eyes with carved mouldings and prostrate columns, half legible inscriptions, and moss-grown sculptures; after having examined and re-examined certain up-turned tablets and crumbling ornaments; after having often used his walking cane for a crow-bar, and the toe of his boot as a substitute for a pick-axe, and having conveyed to the capacious recesses of his shooting-jacket pocket certain valuable remnants of mosaic work or fragments of jasper and bloodstone; some impertinent

native, more forward than the rest, will venture to compliment him upon the success of his search, and assure him that the excellent knowledge of the English leads them to the immediate discovery of treasure without the necessity of implements, whereas an ignorant man of the country would have toiled all day with his tools, and have thought himself fortunate to have found even a single small coin or trinket. A black man cannot possibly comprehend what other object than gain can allure the wanderer to explore those scenes of desolation; if you speak of a curiosity, he understands a piece of ancient money which may be converted into current coin, or a jewelled relic which may be bartered or melted down to serve the same purpose. It will be found impossible to convince him that history or antiquarian research have anything to do with the pursuit, and he is somewhat inclined to regard it as an act of poaching, an infringement of his legal right, to search for treasure among the ruins of his own city. This may be easily believed, when it is understood, that in every ancient Mussulman city, when the ruins are extensive, there are generally some hundreds of treasure-hunters who make this calling their regular, or rather I should say irregular, means of subsistence. In former times of revolution and rapine, it was the invariable custom of all the wealthy to conceal their riches in some private recess about their mansions; and, to this day, many are the families who are suddenly raised from abject poverty to comparative luxury,

by a lucky find in walls, or wells, or secret niches. Some are exceedingly artful and ingenious in their ways and means of discovering these deposits of treasure, and I believe considerable skill can alone render it a very profitable trade, unless the goddess Luchmi should condescend to guide the seeker.

Beyond the walls of Deig the country is for some miles dotted with the remains of gardens and basins of water, and many very handsome buildings. The subject of the engraving, which illustrates or is illustrated by this article, is one of these. It is a picturesque object, though when nearly approached it loses much of its importance and beauty, being built of brick, overlaid with white plaster to imitate marble, of which it has all the resplendent appearance when viewed at a distance. The building is called the Shrine of Mohummed Kahn, a Mussulman chief, who figured in the history of these provinces contemporary with Afrasiab, and who after death became sainted; but for what cause I was unable to ascertain. His life certainly does not appear to have displayed any great piety, for history represents him to have been a man of a naturally ferocious disposition, debased by intemperance and the reckless indulgence of a vengeful temper and inordinate avarice. Of this the following passage will be sufficient evidence: it presents a striking picture of the insubordination and intrigue which have nowhere been carried to a more fearful height than in the government of the kingdom of Delhi. The flux and reflux of power, the

hourly revulsion of the public will, the instability of popularity and command in the wild tumult of alternate despotism and anarchy, cannot I believe be illustrated by ancient or modern history more fully than in the following incidents, which I present to the reader as an example of the character of my hero, whose memory is sainted among the Mussulmans and upheld as a pattern of excellence.

In the reign of Shah Aulum, Emperor of Delhi, the office of vizier had long since been matter of rivalry between Afrasiab and Mirza Zaffi Kahn, but the former being a chief of great influence, and being much beloved by the people, continued in power, notwithstanding it was rumoured that the affection of the Emperor was in favour of Mirza Zaffi, to whom he had given a command of troops upon the borders. At the same time Mohummed Kahn, the subject of this sketch, was governor of the Fort of Agra, and between him and Afrasiab there had for many years existed a bitter enmity, which daily circumstances continued to inflame, until at last the ever watchful Mohummed Kahn, taking advantage of certain political disorders in the capital, determined upon seizing this opportunity of slaking his rancourous thirst for vengeance. He entered into a conspiracy with the equally envious Mirza Zaffi, and laid a scheme for alluring the minister from the court, so that his rival being at hand with his troops might enter the city and usurp the office of vizier.

With this view Mirza Zaffi collected a large force, and dividing them into small bodies, advanced within one day's march of the capital, and then Mohummed Kahn having issued from the fort of Agra with a small band of his adherents, made a descent upon and laid waste the private estate of the Vizier, which that nobleman no sooner ascertained than he obtained the Emperor's permission to punish the offender, with a strong body of troops from the garrison. Then immediately as Afrasiab quitted Delhi, Mirza Zaffi marched in, and boldly advancing his men into the very palace of the Emperor, he was at once proclaimed Vizier by that imbecile monarch, who also was persuaded to bestow upon him the hand of the Begum Khadeja's daughter, together with a large sum of money as a dowry.

Being over-elated with his extraordinary success, the new Vizier threw off that courteous and fascinating address which, for a time, had gained him the voice of the nobles and officers around the King's person, and displayed his character in its true colors, before he had become firmly established in his new dignity. His conduct became suddenly so overbearing and imperious that his adherents fell off from him daily; those who had been most active in his support were speedily his bitterest foes, and as fully determined upon his removal as they had been anxious for his success. Conspiracies were springing up in all quarters within the city and the court, but their

agency was rendered unnecessary by the policy of Afrasiab, to whom news of the revolution had been carried before he had arrived at his *jaghir*. At the same time, the supplanted minister being unprepared for the reaction in his favor which so suddenly took effect at court, deliberated upon his means of redress, and finding himself with too small a force to act unsupported in open defiance of the Emperor, he prudently changed the object of his expedition, and instead of chastising Mohummed Kahn for his aggression, he forthwith made overtures of coalescence with that chief, promising him an equal share with himself in the administration. Mohummed Kahn, ever ready for enterprize, ever zealous in his own cause, and panting for power, without demur acceded to the proposal, united his troops with those of Afrasiab, and with this powerful force the insurgents now marched against the capital. On their route thither they persuaded many disaffected chiefs to accompany them with their armies, and by private emissaries they even succeeded in winning over to their cause several of the chief among the nobles at court, and likewise M. Paulin, a French officer commanding the troops of the renowned Begum Sumroo.

It appears however that the rebels pressed their confidence rather too far at court, for some of the chiefs, becoming alarmed for their own safety, discovered the plot to the Emperor, and urged upon him the necessity of dismissing the perfidious minister,

Mirza Zaffi, and of marching immediately to disperse the forces of Afrasiab and of Mohummed Kahn, who gained strength daily, and who were fast advancing upon the capital. This treacherous disclosure was detected by M. Paulin, who with the rest of the conspiring nobles immediately changed their ground, and offered their services for the punishment of the insurgents. All this occurred at the early council, while Mirza Zaffi, ever more a soldier than a statesman, was exercising his troops upon the plain without the city gates. He had not, however, left his seat without trusty surveillance, and no sooner had the Emperor acquiesced in the scheme than his secret emissary carried the news to his master. Now Mirza Zaffi having his cousin Mujeid ud Dowla with about fifteen hundred horse at that moment under review, boldly addressed them and declared the danger to which he was exposed. With one voice they swore him service; and, after a few seconds of deliberation, the wily chief made known his resolution to hasten forthwith and combine his force with that of the very men who were in arms against him. With full confidence that their self-interest would prove more durable than their enmity, he marched directly to their camp, and demanding an audience with the chiefs made his proposal, which was immediately accepted. Thus were these three hitherto implacable enemies bound by the same compact of treachery, avarice, ambition, and mutual protection.

The news of this formidable confederacy excited terrible apprehension at court, but the Prince Mirza Juwan, son of the Emperor, at once undertook, in co-operation with M. Paulin, to meet and overthrow the rebel army. This spirited and salutary advice, however, was unfortunately over-ruled by the intrigue of the Begum Khadeja, who apprehensive of evil to her son-in-law, Mirza Zaffi, persuaded the Emperor to embrace an amicable negociation, to which Shah Aulum, with the irresolution and pusillanimity which marked the latter years of his reign, acceded; and the Prince Mirza Juwan, accompanied by M. Paulin and Latafut Kahn, was charged with the embassy.

The traitors, having signified their readiness to accept a compromise, admitted the royal ambassadors to their camp, but through a wanton love of bloodshed and vengeance, they surrounded the council tent with an ambush, took the chiefs with their followers prisoners, and, without delay, barbarously murdered M. Paulin and burnt out the eyes of Latafut. Then making their own terms as to the ransom of the Prince's life, they marched in triumph and entered the city of Delhi, where the enfeebled monarch was compelled to receive them with every mark of royal favour and affection. Mirza Zaffi was immediately reinstated in the dignity of prime minister, and the other conspirators were loaded with titles and honors; but the faithless Mirza, faithless to the most solemn vows which through suspicion had been imposed

upon him by Mohummed Kahn, refused to comply with the terms of the compact, and retained in his own hands the sole administration of affairs. And now again deeming that he was too firmly fixed in power to be shaken from his seat, he excited the discontent and hatred of the nobles by renewed acts of tyranny and insolence; so that in a very few days he incurred the vengeance which his infamy merited.

Mohummed Kahn, indulging the natural ferocity of his heart, swore to accomplish his destruction, and in concert with other malcontents plotted his death by the hand of the assassin.

Having ascertained that the minister was about to march to Agra upon state business, they, as if undesignedly, encamped under the walls of Deig, through which town he would of necessity pass, and when Mirza Zaffi approached, they engaged in a feigned dispute of a riotous nature among themselves touching the boundaries of certain lands. When the cause of the tumult was reported to the Vizier, he signified his pleasure to adjust the difference and decide upon the claim, and for that purpose ordered his elephant to be driven into the camp of the disputants, where, meeting face to face his rivals and their supporters, the Mirza wisely treated them with unwonted respect and courtesy. He directed his elephant to approach that of Mohummed Kahn, who in compliance with ancient usage rose in his *háoda*, saluted and embraced the Vizier, and in so doing

seized and detained his right hand, which, being preconcerted, was the signal for his death-blow. The slave who rode behind Mohummed Khan drew his dagger and stabbed the Vizier to the heart.

When the news of this treachery was made known to the Emperor, the assassins were received by that weak monarch with every expression of pleasure, and the office of Vizier was immediately conferred upon Afrasiab. Mohummed Khan was also greeted with marks of the King's approbation, and was invested with the command of a province, where he continued somewhat out of reach of court intrigue for many years; but having on some occasion offered an indignity to his old ally and enemy, Afrasiab, he fell a victim to the revenge of that remorseless villain, and was buried in the vicinity of the spot where he had accomplished the assassination of Mirza Zaffi.

JACKSON
COLLECTION.

FUTTEHPORE SIKRI.

THE BHURTPORE OR BIANA HILLS.

AKBUR, Emperor of Delhi, the most renowned of all the Mogul monarchs, removed his court from the imperial city, on account of the difficult navigation of the Jumna in the dry season, and made Agra his capital; the river being up to that place fairly practicable, during the greater part of the year. He however found the climate of Agra by no means comparable to that of Delhi, and glad to escape from the heat and glare of the city which he had founded, he built for himself a magnificent garden residence, at a place called Futtehpore Sikri, about four and twenty miles distant from Agra, upon the Delhi road. The walls inclosing this royal palace, its offices and stately courts, were six miles in circumference, having within their limits two or three of the highest points of the Bhurtpore or Biana range of hills. The situation is most romantic, and the

Ruins at Fatehpore Sikra

climate particularly fine; in all respects it must have been a fitting residence for this great and glorious monarch, whose name is revered by the natives no less than that of Alexander the Great.

This sumptuous range of palaces, occupied solely by the royal household, was, I believe, unrivalled in extent and magnificence throughout the world. It is now a heap of deserted ruins, although founded not more than two hundred and seventy years since. It is utterly subverted, and all its noblest buildings are prostrate, except one or two sacred shrines of Moslem saints, and the state entrance, which are still kept in repair. Of the other principal edifices there is in most cases just so much left standing as to render their original purposes apparent, and to evince the extraordinary grandeur of their design and the richness of their decorations; but Futtehpore Sikri, like most other places of great celebrity in Hindostan, has been so favourite a theme of modern travellers, that a verbal description of it would only weary my readers; for, those who take a delight in the history of the oriental world are doubtless already familiar with the details of this famous place; while, if I attempted to describe them, those who are indifferent to the subject would lay aside my volume with that elusive and irretrievable declaration of distaste politely and learnedly styled an oscitation, which goes more bitterly to the heart of a presumptuous author than the most poignant attacks of open censure. To

those who are neither well acquainted with the wonders to which I refer, nor insensible to their merits, if proved, I give this modest assurance,—that the annexed plate is the finest illustration that could be offered them, and more eloquent than a whole chapter of words. It is a part of the ancient *serai*, and overlooks the site of the arena, which was used by the Emperors for chariot races and wild beast fights.

There is one curious fact in the history of the great Akbur, which I have never met with in the English language, and therefore I shall not hesitate to introduce it here. Eminent as he really was, both as a soldier and a statesman, Akbur was no less skilled in the dark mysteries of the soothsayer. Numerous are the accredited instances in which he is stated to have divined with truth the most inscrutable operations of fate, whole months before they were open to the vulgar eye; and to this day is displayed by the guides at Futtehpore Sikri the mystic chamber, or rather the remnants of it, in which the subtle secrets of the magic arts were practised by the Emperor. It has been before remarked, that the Brahmins have great pretensions to excellence in the occult sciences; and, although he was the great Mogul himself, to these heretics Akbur was pleased to extend his especial patronage; he even condescended to admit them to his *ædes sacræ*, when their great proficiency entitled them to that honor. To this rather than to his earth-bound wisdom, the

Brahmins attribute his unbroken prosperity, during a reign of peace and plenty, extending over half a century. The miraculous tales which are told and believed of Akbur and his school of soothsayers are, as I said, innumerable, and certainly many are very ingenious, and appear to carry with them very convincing evidence of their truth.

Of all the dealers in magic throughout the Indian Empire, those of Surat appear to have been most celebrated; and certainly some of their predictions have been of that nature which at once confounds the sceptic, and leaves him only the option of following Addison's advice touching ghost stories. I cannot answer for words, I quote them from memory—"we must not entirely believe them, because they may be false; we must not altogether disbelieve them, because they may be true."

A very scarce and curious work has just come into my possession, entitled—"A Voyage to Suratt, in the year 1689, by J. Covington, M.A., Chaplain to his Majesty;" a work which is highly complimented in the Harleian Catalogue, Vol. II. p. 698. The reader, I take for granted, will readily pardon my quoting a page or two from the quaintly written diary of this reverend gentleman, recounting a very singular instance of circumstantial accuracy in one of these prophets; and after perusal, I doubt not but he will join in the pretty things said to the author in

an ode prefixed to the book, in which his friend assures him,

> "You have so lively your Discov'ries Writ,
> We Reade and Voyage with you as we sit,
> With you hoise Sail and reach the Indian Shoare;
> The reale Scene cou'd scarce delight us more."

"*For Astrologie and Natural Physick,*" says our ancient author, "*the Indian Brahmins account themselves still very eminent and renowned, by which they foretel such distant Occurrences, and effect such strong Operations as seem to Men very wonderfull and astonishing, and not to be done without some secret Recourse to the Invisible Spirits, or familiaritie with Supernatural Powers. We reade the same of some excellent ancient Philosophers, so learn'd in the Works of Nature as thereby to point out the times both of Eclipses in the Planets and Commotions in the State, Earthquakes and Inundations, Storms at Sea, and Plagues at Land. And that the Reader may see that their extraordinary Skill in magical Operations is not yet vanisht, I will here relate a Story of them, which I remember was often publickly repeated by the last President at Suratt, Bartholomew Harris, concerning a certain Brahmin, in the time of the Presidency of Mr. Aungers, who foretold the Arrival of a certain English ship several Months afore she came to the Harbour. President Aungers being under a disturbance of his mind, and oppress'd with some perplext Thoughts for*

Want of Intelligence from England, was desired by the Brahmin Physician, who observ'd his Grief and the Melancholie of his Spirit, the Reason of his Concern and dejected Looks, with a cheerfull Tender of his Service and Willingness to administer to him in anything that might contribute to the removal of his Malady, and to his Cure.

" The President told him, that it was beyond the Power of Physick to heal his Disease, or abate that Distemper he laboured under; that no Cordial cou'd revive Thoughts, but News from England, or cheer his Heart, except it were the Sight of an English Ship, which he had long expected, but now despaired of. 'If an English Ship, then,' says the Brahmin, 'is your only Cure, be pleased to give me Leave to be absent for three or four Days! and I question not, by that Time, but to remove your Trouble, and bring you undoubted News of that Medicine you long for. Upon which the President consented to his departure for that Time, and withal promised him, as an Encouragement to his Skill, a rich Paramin, or Indian Mantle, for a Reward. Within four Days the Brahmin return'd, and, addressing himself to the President, assured him that, at such a Time, an English Ship would arrive at Suratt River's Mouth, with such a particular Person, who had formerly been in India, on board her; and that on such a particular Day of the Month, he would arrive at the Custom-house of Suratt, before Eleven in the Morning. The President, pleas'd with this Assurance and this confident Relation

of the Brahmin, diverted himself with the thoughts of it for some time, and a little after, rehears'd it jocularly, at a publick Dinner, to all the Factors. The young Men who heard this Discourse, did, sometime after, recollect with themselves, as they were walking down the Banks of the River, to enjoy the Morning Breeze, that this was the critical Morning foretold by the Brahmin, when an English Ship should arrive, and such a particular Person in her. The thoughts of it hastened them back towards the Custom-house, to enquire if there were any English News, and upon their return were surpris'd at the Sight of an English Boat, which they espied was rowing up the River; and, were no sooner arrived at the Custom-house, but they found the Englishman, who had been expected, in her. The News of this was very gratefull to the President, and not ungratefull to the Brahmin, who received a curious Paramin from the Hands of the Governour, whom he had oblig'd with so faithful and particular a Prophetick Relation.

"And the worthy President, Mr. Harris, who had himself been sometimes in Distress for English News, has likewise told me of a Brahmin's Proposals to him, of bringing him undoubted Intelligence how the Company's affairs in England stood, within the space of four days; but that he dared not to accept of the Proposition, because he was confident that it depended upon the Assistance of a Familiar. And surely those Sprightly Beings can easily despatch a very tedious

Voyage in a very short time. For if we only consider the nimble Progress of Light through the Air—with what Swiftness it darts its bright active Atoms from East to West, and flies through the immense Expanse from the lofty Regions of the Sky, we cannot with any great Reason deny this same, or greater Power to the active Spirits of Darkness, who are stript of all the Clogs of Matter, and void of all material Substance."

I could have presented the reader with anecdotes of the same description, which far surpass the foregoing in the wonders of magical power; but since they are attested by natives, not by European governors, presidents, and chaplains, of His Britannic Majesty, I thought it possible that, in this matter-of-fact age, they might have been contemptuously treated as idle inventions, or, at least, have been regarded with unmerited suspicion. For the same reason, I have not ventured to detail the rites and ceremonies, the cantations and incantations, which have been described to me, as the means by which this supernatural knowledge is acquired. That vile impostors have, at various times, brought evil report upon the art by pretending to its mysteries, cannot be contradicted; but surely it has been so with all other arts and mysteries from the days of Noah downwards; and with deference it is submitted, that this very circumstance is, in reality, a compliment to the genuine science, rather than a disgrace to it; for the impostor certainly will not assume the colours of that in which there is no

virtue. Others there are, however, whose conduct has tended greatly to overthrow the public faith in these matters; those who, for the accomplishment of sinister purposes, have allowed and encouraged a false belief, that they were in communion with, and in the enjoyment of, supernatural powers from spirits of another world, until the deceit has been discovered. By the fraudulent behaviour of two such persons, not long since, was the simple credulity of the people abused, and discredit for a while befel magic and the magicians in all the country round about Futtehpore Sikri, and Agra.

Trusting that my readers are disposed to be entertained with this very curious subject, I shall in few words relate the circumstance here alluded to, begging them to rely upon my assurance that the story—even if it be by wilful misrepresentation or accidental misconception, by an over-anxiety for the full display of truth, or the insensible influence of the imagination, in any measure embellished—is nevertheless founded upon fact, built with the materials of original reality, and its base supported by the most substantial testimony.

I have noticed the wild romantic appearance of the range of hills upon which Futtehpore Sikri is elevated; and certainly no place could be more appropriate to the dark and mysterious tales of magic, or the deeds of carnage and intrigues of a bloody and despotic court, than the interminable ruins of forts

Engraved by T. Fielding

and tombs which are scattered in all directions along the chain. The plate gives a representation of the country on the south of the Biana range between Futtehpore Sikri and Agra, and not far from the scene of the story which I am about to relate.

Among the ruins here alluded to are those of an ancient mausoleum, commonly known by the name of

THE JAOD BHÁE;

though why so called none can explain, since the extreme antiquity of the building has left, neither by history nor tradition, any account or fair conjecture of its origin, the date of its construction, or of the rank or nation of him in honor of whom it was erected. From time immemorial it continued to be the resort of the religious, both among Hindoos and Mussulmans, who worshipped the unknown saint with equal devotion, until the occurrence of which I am about to speak raised in their minds some awkward apprehensions lest the place should happen to be tenanted by a race of spirits inimicable to those whom they were accustomed to invoke within its walls.

The Jaod Bháe, though by no means an extensive building, was of elephantine stability, upon the plan of an octagon, having a solitary chamber within, the breadth of which was something less than the thickness of its walls, and these were very many feet of solid masonry. It was raised upon a terrace about five feet in height, and was covered by a massive

dome, moss-grown and blackened with age, but still unimpaired in strength. The lower parts of the structure alone showed symptoms of decay, a foot or two of solid masonry having been eaten away all round the base by damp and corrosion, or worn by the touch of the devotees, who according to the accounts of the natives have continued their visits to it through thousands of successive generations.

Dark and mysterious was the place within; the foot-fall was re-echoed ten thousand times with hollow reverberations, and the voice was carried circling up to the vaulted roof in solemn swells of most unearthly sound, which could not fail to startle the intruder and make him strive to penetrate with curious eye the impervious gloom which filled the lofty dome. Bats and noisome reptiles, hitherto unseen, revealed themselves the instant they were disturbed by the entrance of a visitor; and it required no small nerve there to remain and keep the mind intent upon devotion, while repeating even a short prayer, amid the hissing of snakes, the loathsome creeping of lizards, the screaming and flapping of vampires, and the concerted accompaniment of innumerable obnoxious vermin; and yet thousands there were who braved all these terrors to seek favor of this saint unknown.

Four or five years since two soldiers of the East India Company's European Regiment who were then cantoned at Agra applied to their commanding

officer for leave of absence from their military duties for a few days, upon the plea of seeking for some treasure among the ruins in the neighbourhood, affirming that they had certain intelligence of a spot where it could be found. It being by no means of rare occurrence that coin and valuables, even to a very large amount, are found among the crumbling tombs and palaces, and the men being of good character, the commanding officer acceded to their request, they obtained a fortnight's leave of absence, and departed, nobody knew or enquired whither. At the expiration of their term of absence they returned to their duty, but without having made the discovery of which they had declared themselves so sanguine; yet having conducted themselves well, as far as was known, during their period of leave, they found no difficulty in renewing it shortly afterwards. On the expiration of their liberty, however, they were this time at fault; they did not rejoin the ranks, nor were any tidings to be gained of them among their comrades. Orders were issued for their apprehension, as deserters, and parties searched the ruins in all directions, yet no news could be gleaned of them by any means: no one had seen or heard of them.

Some weeks after the disappearance of these men it was reported among the natives that the saint whom they were accustomed to worship at the Jaod Bháe had become disturbed by some misconduct or sacrilegious transgression of the people, for that in more

than one instance, lately, strange noises, as of anger, and of fiend-like laughter and mockery, had been heard by the devotees within the chamber, so that they became exceedingly terrified, and dared not to venture there, except in company of the priests and holy men.

One evening as a party of women, carrying upon their heads large bundles of raw cotton, chanced to pass the Jaod Bháe after dusk, a tall figure wrapt in a black mantle suddenly appeared in the very midst of them. The terror-stricken females for a second were rooted to the spot, their breath suspended, their eyes starting from the sockets, as they gazed upon the cadaverous and earth-stained visage of their supernatural visitor. Then with a simultaneous shriek they dropped their *bhojes* and fled, with scared and trembling steps, in all directions over the ruins. When, —by devious routes over the wild and desolate plain, their speed continually increased as each successive heap of ruins became peopled with the ghastly creatures of their affrighted fancies,—they at last arrived at home, and told their piteous tale to their husbands, the men were distressed at the loss of the cotton, and were inclined to think that their timid partners had been needlessly alarmed by suddenly encountering some wandering *fakhir* among the tombs: they therefore determined upon setting forth in a body to the place, in order to bring home the

cotton; yet not without a reverend Brahmin, who would be able to protect them against ghostly evil, and also a band of the city *tchokedars* (watchmen) to guard them against danger to their bodies. The night having closed in with heavy clouds betokening a storm, the party thought it advisable to carry torches, lest in the unusual darkness of the night they should be unable to discover the cotton, or to distinguish by their characteristic features the beings of the three different worlds, should they meet with either.

They lit their torches therefore, and having armed themselves with swords and weighty clubs of bamboo shod with iron, they set forth upon their search in silence, composing a party of about twenty. Scarcely a word was spoken on the road, except by the Brahmin, who alone preserved a face unmoved by the fear of supernatural danger; each appeared absorbed in his own speculations, except when occasionally the exclamation of one or more of their number called the attention of the rest to a solitary pillar, or a dismembered stump of wood, assuming all the terrors of ghostly animation in the fluctuating glare of the ruddy torch-light. As they journeyed onward the wind rose and moaned among the blackened walls and towers of the tottering ruins; now and then a heavy drop of rain fell hissing upon the flaring torches, and the inky clouds appeared to gather from all quarters of the heavens; but the natives of India

are for the most part wonderfully indifferent to storm and tempest, and at first scarcely a remark was made upon the subject. Ere long, however, it became apparent that no ordinary storm was pending, for, as it often happens before very terrible hurricanes in the East, the fitful sighing of the breeze was suddenly lulled, and was succeeded by a sultry calm,—the leaden clouds dropped nearer to the earth, and seemed to compress the sluggish atmosphere with their superincumbent weight, until it became almost too dense for respiration. The threatening aspect of nature alarmed all living things around; the yelling jackall and the screaming night-birds vied with one another in raising an ominous discord, which not the calmest stoic could listen to without forebodings of evil, and which even the wandering cattle and skulking *paria* dogs understood as warnings, and forthwith betook themselves to the covered tombs.

The party in search of the cotton had arrived within a short distance of the Jaod Bháe, when a crimson flash of almost blinding light was suddenly darted from the impending clouds, and appeared to be the signal for the war of elements to commence, for, with the crashing peal of thunder which immediately followed it, there burst upon them a gust of wind so violent that not only were their torches extinguished in a second, but themselves were well nigh carried away, so that they all threw themselves upon the earth to avoid the danger; and in the next instant,

torrents of sulphurous rain gushed from the broken clouds. A pitchy darkness enveloped them, and the Brahmin wisely counselled that, when the lightnings again revealed the scene, they should look out in all directions for some building, in which they might shelter themselves, until the violence of the hurricane had abated. At that very instant, a flash, if possible more vivid than the former, shot in zigzag courses from the zenith to every point of the horizon, and continued for several seconds playing with fearful brilliancy over the whole country round. Not twenty yards in front of them stood the frowning form of the Jaod Bháe; between themselves and the building was plainly revealed to every man among them the figure of a being precisely such as had been described by the affrighted women, and, upon its head, it carried one of the identical *bhojes* of cotton. "Thieves! thieves!" "*Choar-log! choar!*" roared the *tchokedars*, as, sword in hand, they started to their feet, and rushed upon the figure; but, for a second, impenetrable darkness had again surrounded them, and though, with the velocity of thought, the flashes were renewed, the man, or spirit, whichever it might be, and the bale of cotton, had vanished, though he seemed almost within the grasp of their extended hands. No cover was there at that spot where he could lie concealed, even if there had been time to have fled a pace or two: the space was open, and though strewed with fallen masonry and heaps of

stones, and here and there overrun with weeds and dwarf shrubs, there was no sort of escape for flesh and blood. No chink or cranny, no trace of foot-steps, no vestige of the cotton, no clue to the mystery could they discover; and while they were occupied upon the fruitless search, unwelcome thoughts were suggested to their minds, and the trembling knees of several refused to support their bodies; so they fell to the earth, and prayed for *dawai*, mercy, to the saint of the awful Jaod Bháe; until the Brahmin, by a strenuous effort, having regained possession of a portion of his wits, arose, and with a less boisterous devotion than that of some around him, pronounced, or endeavoured so to do, a saving verse from the *Shastra*, and then somewhat more articulately desiring them to follow him, without farther ceremony, he led the way back to the city.

By virtue of the spell which the holy man had thus used to preserve them from destruction, they arrived safely at home, and having assembled a tolerably numerous party around the fire which burnt upon the floor, in the centre of the guard-room in the city gate, the reverend priest, with a calm unshaken voice, related the awful upshot of their excursion, and being unwilling to declare himself to the people, as to his knowledge concerning the things which they had witnessed, without first consulting his brother Brahmins, he retired to his temple, and there, in conclave with those holy men, repeated all, and required their opinions. Whatever

might have been the result of their deliberations, we should not endeavour to pry into the mysterious workings of that sacred assembly; suffice it that the issue be made known. After the morning prayers and ablutions on the Jumna bank, the grave priests summoned the expectant crowds to hear what they had to say, and after confessing that the night had been spent in prayer and ceremony, they also admitted that they had been unable to divine the exact nature of the saint's inquietude, but that they had been favored with his commands to attend at the Jaod Bháe at noon-day, and perform certain mystic ceremonies, when it was more than probable that they should hear his farther pleasure.

Carrying with them holy fire and Ganges' sacred water, the priests, attended by a vast concourse of people, arrived at the Jaod Bháe shortly before noon; having made every necessary preparation they retired within the building precisely at the appointed hour, and carefully closing the entrances with mats provided for that purpose, they remained in consultation with the saint until sun-set; during the whole of which time thick clouds of smoke issued from the Jaod Bháe, and at intervals the most unearthly noises were heard, accompanied with cries, screams, and piteous groans, which caused the terrified people to fall upon their faces in an agony of fear and trembling.

As the sun first touched the horizon, the smoke

ceased to ascend, and then the venerable priests with hair dishevelled, with wild and harassed looks, appeared before the multitude. "Children," cried the chief of them, with triumph beaming in his aged countenance; "My Children, by extraordinary exertions, by means of potent charms and obscure rites which we have received from the gods themselves, by fearful penance, and the most painful self-inflictions, we have at last compelled the unwilling spirit to make known to us the cause of his terrible perturbation; but this we are unable to reveal; and all that it concerns you to know is, how to appease the wrath of the offended saint, and gain for yourselves the favour of his protection and support. Let every man who is anxious to obtain this advantage to his soul, and a similar advancement in his worldly welfare, on the evening of each successive new moon advance boldly to the entrance of the Jaod Bháe, and cast within the chamber a piece of pure silver coin, no matter how small; and this his offering to the saint will be repaid to him by the gods a thousand-fold. Our blessing too upon those who give heed to our words, but dire curses will assuredly overtake those who shall dare to defy his revealed commands."

These mysterious occurrences created uneasy fears in the hearts of the former worshippers of the saint, which were strengthened by the strange tales of noises and apparitions from time to time encountered in the neighbourhood of the Jaod Bháe; so that the place was altogether avoided by the people, except

when they went monthly to make their offerings, and then it was with becoming dread and reverence.

Now the Jaod Bháe stood very near the annual encampment and practice-ground of the Artillery; and it so happened, that upon the occasion of a review and general inspection, the Jaod Bháe attracted the irreligious notice of a certain Artillery officer, who, through a culpable love of mischief, an inordinate delight in the display of the force of powder, and a very iniquitous process of reasoning, came to the conclusion that it would have an unusually grand effect to mine and blow up the Jaod Bháe, rather than to perform the simple operation of igniting some fifty or sixty barrels of powder under the level earth. The idea was suggested to the commanding officer, who, by a like evil influence, came to a similarly wicked opinion, and it was agreed that the mining of the Jaod Bháe would indeed form a glorious spectacle at the review. Orders were therefore immediately issued for a shaft to be sunk below the foundation, and a mine of five-and-forty barrels of powder to be prepared under its very centre, so that the whole building might be blown into the skies.

The task proved to be one of greater difficulty than was anticipated, for beneath the soil was discovered a vaulted mass of solid masonry, which proved to be no less than four or five feet in thickness, and so firmly constructed that not a single stone could be moved entire, but the shaft was literally carved through it. At the

point where the miners penetrated, they found a narrow passage running east and west, just large enough to admit a man of moderate size. It was unencumbered and in complete repair, and on being explored was found to communicate with other galleries of the same description leading in a transverse direction, and each was found to open into a small apartment under the body of the building. In the centre room was found a rough sort of round table with a couple of settles, and on either side a tolerably comfortable bed of raw cotton, an old straw hat, a clasp knife, a small German pipe, an iron ladle, in which metal had been melted, a few small files and other tools, such as are used in coining, and a little bag containing some unfinished imitations of rupees. Some few trifles of the same description were also discovered in different corners and recesses of the vault, and also a supply of tobacco and spirits.

There was no hesitation in at once attaching suspicion of very recent occupancy of these snug quarters to the two men of the European Regiment who had deserted; and deeming it probable that they might make their appearance to clear away all vestiges of their illicit trade, as soon as they should hear of the mining operations which were going forward, the officer gave orders for a guard to be secreted in the building, to keep watch during the night.

It so happened, I suppose by a private arrangement of the saint, that this very night was that of the

new moon, and the dusk of evening had scarcely fallen, when the Jaod Bháe was visited by the first devout observer of the Brahmin's commands; and, having cast, with a hasty hand, his piece of silver, a four-anna-piece, within the doorway, he turned and beat a somewhat precipitate retreat. But the serjeant of the ambuscade having picked up the coin, naturally concluded that the donor must be a confederate of the coiners, and without turning out his men, he immediately stole after the retiring Hindoo, and seized him; stopping his mouth with his hand, to prevent alarm. He then conveyed him to the vault beneath the Jaod Bháe; the poor wretch, without doubt, being persuaded all the time that he was about to be sacrificed to the offended saint. The serjeant in his turn, when he came to examine the man, mistook him for an accomplished villain, who, like all natives, had an ingenious excuse at his tongue's end, ready for any emergency; he therefore gagged him, and binding him hand and foot, left him upon his back in the coiner's chamber; and thus one after another, he continued to seize no less than a dozen of these poor innocent people, including some few women; until at last they arrived in such numbers, that he was unwilling to take charge of any more, and began to give some credence to the story which each told, and was ready to swear to. So he contented himself with those whom he had already taken, and continued his watch throughout the night, without meeting those

for whose capture he was set. But about an hour or two before daylight, he made a prize of another, whom he had already expected. Having sent his men below, he remained himself upon the look out, and at the time just mentioned, he saw a tall white figure approaching, who no sooner entered the building than he drew from his mantle a small lamp, which he forthwith lighted, and carefully gathered up every fraction of the silver from the floor. When he had completed his task, and was about to depart, the serjeant stepped forth from his hiding place, and took him also prisoner. Then carrying him below, he confronted him with his dupes, and exposed him to them.

In the morning, he was taken before the officer, with the rest of the captives, and after a strict examination, during which he adhered to the most barefaced untruths, and endeavoured, by all sorts of inventions, to deceive his hearers, he, at last, by dint of threats, and promises of security, was induced to confess the impositions which his colleagues had practised upon the multitude, when they pretended to consult with the saint, and their utter ignorance of any true system of magic.

Ghaut and Temples at Gokul

GOKUL.

Upon the east bank of the river Jumna, about fifteen miles below the city and cantonment of Muttra, stands a small town named Gokul, esteemed peculiarly sacred among the pious Hindoos, in consequence of its having been a favorite resort of the god Krishna while he was on earth. Krishna was born at Bindrabund, which is about as far above Muttra as Gokul is below it; and these three places were fortunate enough to enjoy the presence of the god during the greater part of his sojourn among men, which occurred about 1300 years before Christ. Here the solemn Brahmin points out a spot where the deity played a tune upon his flute which gave life to the stones and trees around him;* here he shows the worn and polished root of a tree where the god was wont to seat himself while singing songs of love to the wood-nymphs and the milk-maids; here a patch

* Krishna is the Apollo of the Hindoos.

of ground which has remained barren ever since Krishna, while standing there, had cause for anger; there a smooth rock upon the river bank where he was in the habit of washing his *dhoti*, and there a hill upon which he was accustomed to receive and cure all who were afflicted by disease or mental suffering. These were the more playful acts of Krishna, for Gokul was the resort of his leisure hours; it was in Bindrabund and Muttra that his more terrible deeds were executed, such as the destruction of the vile serpent of evil, Kali Nagur, which had thrown itself in coils across the river Jumna and stopped the course of the waters, so that those who were not killed through thirst died of the poisonous impurity of the stream, and many other equally redoubtable acts which are the theme of song and fable in all these parts. There are in particular two spots of broken ground which are pointed out to the inquisitive visitor as of very especial interest, having been formerly the site of two trees, the Jemla and the Arjia, concerning which the following

LEGEND

is related with great reverence, as recording one of the earliest of Krishna's god-like acts, while he was yet but the infant son of a cow-herd.

Some few hundreds of years before Krishna was born, a farmer of considerable wealth had two remarkably handsome sons, by name Neeld and Kho-

veri, who sadly neglected the management of the land and of the herds and flocks, in consequence of their attention being constantly attracted by the very beautiful women who inhabited this part of the country. The father having tried chastisement repeatedly and in vain, complained of his misfortune to the principal Brahmin of the place, a very venerable and wise man, named Nared; and this holy person undertook to reprove them for their want of duty and to punish them if they heeded him not. Having formed this resolution, Nared accompanied the farmer to the fields to seek for his sons, and found them reclining upon a flowery bank by the side of the Jumna, each extolling the perfections of the beauty who had gained the ascendant in his affections. The reverend Brahmin hesitated not to remonstrate angrily with them concerning their idleness, and endeavoured to impress upon them that being already betrothed to damsels whom they had not seen, they were guilty of great imprudence in suffering their affections to be enslaved by girls who were so greatly their inferiors in degree, and whose beauty was beheld by every passer by, since it is the custom of the lower orders to walk unveiled. The reprobate youths, instead of receiving with respect and submission the reproof of the holy man, laughed aloud at this lecture, and bid him go preach to the cows; at which indignity the Brahmin became so justly incensed that he hesitated not to inflict upon them such a

punishment as he thought they merited. Dipping his fingers in the *lota* (small brass pot) in which he carried some holy Ganges water, he sprinkled the youths therewith, and uttering a curse, exclaimed, "In the name of Brahma I command thee to quit thy forms as young men and become trees." On that very instant the youths became the one a jemla, the other an arjia tree. Then the devout Brahmin taking some of the Ganges water in his mouth spirted it upon the trunks of the trees saying, "Thus be thou firm and unmoved, until, by Brahma's permission, thou shall kiss the feet of the holy child Krishna." And during some hundreds of years the trees remained unmoved.

Krishna having been born, had arrived at the age of three years, when one day he was clinging to his mother's neck while she was occupied in turning some cream into butter; and while her hands were thus employed, it happened that a pot of milk, which was upon the fire, boiled over, whereupon the mother hastily put down Krishna, and ran to take off the pot. The young god was mortified at this action, which indisputably proved that his mother loved the milk better than himself; and thus thinking, in the anger of the moment, he kicked over the pot of milk, upset the pan of cream, and ran away, his mother pursuing him, till she was quite weary. Then the sweet boy, having repented of his momentary display of temper, ran into his mother's arms, and begged

her forgiveness; but his mother being wroth, regarded not his contrition, but carried him into the village, and having procured some string, endeavoured to bind him to two trees, which stood by the river side; but Krishna being still full of sport, showed her that all the cord which she could obtain from the rope-makers was not long enough to bind him, until he was pleased to permit it. Then, being inclined to liberate himself after his mother had departed, he planted his foot firmly against the ground, and, with god-like strength, tore up the trees by the roots. Now, at this time there were great numbers of children playing around and making sport of the chastised Krishna, but immediately upon the miraculous fall of those trees, they became greatly alarmed, and the more so, when, as the earth trembled, the prostrate trees were in a moment transformed into two very beautiful youths, who laid their heads in the dust in token of reverence, and then kissing the feet of the young god, suddenly vanished. This report of the children was not however at that time believed by the ignorant men of Gokul, who thought of the fall of those trees only as a miraculous escape of the boy from being crushed, and Krishna himself was too nobly modest to boast of his performance.

Gokul, though so peculiarly sanctified a spot, and in truth a remarkably picturesque one, has no sort of importance in wealth, or commerce, or extent of habitations; there are however a great number of

Hindoo temples, and not a few very handsome *ghâts*, such as may be seen in the annexed plate. The Brahmins appeared to me to be more than usually civil and ready to give information, and I experienced no difficulty in gaining access to the interiors of the principal temples, an indulgence which is not always allowed. There was very little however to gratify the curiosity in any of them, and like most other Hindoo towns, although particularly attractive to behold at a distance, there was a squalid misery and a want of cleanliness about the place, which induces the visitor to make his visit as short as possible. The sketch was taken from the parapet of one of the *ghâts*, while the sun was declining towards the west: the scene as I beheld it was bathed in a flood of light, yet not wanting in a few points of powerful shadow, which gave an effect to the picture, which is the continual delight of the artist in India when evening is advancing. I am sure the good taste of my readers will render it unnecessary that I should pay any compliment to the artist, who has so admirably transcribed my sketch. The power of daylight which he has thrown into the scene is but a specimen of the peculiar beauty of his style. Hitherto I have spoken only of the mythological history of Gokul;

"Whilst in charm'd Gokul's od'rous vale
The blue eyed Yamuna * descends

* Yamuna—the Jumna. Sir W. Jones's translation of the Sanskrit.

Exulting, and her tripping tide suspends,
The triumph of her mighty sire to hail;"

but it has likewise become memorable as the scene of an action in which the celebrated Begum Sumroo exhibited her spirit and her personal prowess, as the victorious leader of her own troops, at a moment so critical that, without her timely interposition and personal example, the indecision of the Emperor Shah Aulum would have terminated in the defeat and disgrace of his army.

Neujif Kahn, having acted in open defiance of the Emperor's authority, threw his little army of veterans into the fort of Gokul to avoid or resist the resentment of his prince. He was called upon to surrender, but peremptorily refused to do so, and made active preparations for his defence. Around the little fort the rebel threw up strong entrenchments sufficient for the protection of his whole force, and having by every means in his power fortified his position, he coolly awaited the advance of the royal army, which was very greatly superior in numerical strength to his own. Neujif Kahn had often proved himself a soldier of great coolness and vigilance, and his men reposed the the fullest confidence in his skill and courage: they repulsed with astonishing vigour the attack of the royal army and made considerable havoc among them.

Having been engaged in the lines all day, Neujif Kahn permitted his men an hour or two of repose in

the early part of the night, but at midnight he quietly summoned every man to his post, and putting himself at the head of a chosen body of cavalry, he stole unheard and unseen from his entrenchments, and fell with great fury upon the enemy's troops while they were buried in sleep. Having on the first onset carried the lines, he commenced a cruel slaughter of the panic-stricken troops; and having despatched a detachment of infantry and artillery to the rear of the lines by a circuitous route, the royal tents were attacked at the same moment.

The confusion was becoming general, and the troops would have fled in all directions, but appeared, in the disorder, to meet their foes on all sides. The person of the Emperor was in imminent peril from the fire which was kept up upon the royal tents, and a complete overthrow would have been the speedy result, had not the Begum Sumroo, acting in the spirit of the oriental maxim, "Fear when danger is distant, when present fight like heroes," with unexampled address and courage, made a strenuous effort to rally the royal troops. In order to render their mutual positions intelligible, she with great presence of mind set fire to a number of tents and other combustible matter, and then putting herself at the head of her troops, despatched a messenger to the Emperor begging him to repair to her tents which were out of reach of the enemy's battery, while she with one hundred followers, and a single six pounder, which

was commanded by George Thomas, afterwards a general in the service, attacked the rebels with such determination and so much judgment that with this small force she speedily drove them from the lines and restored order to the dispersed troops of the Emperor. The contest was continued with desperate determination on both sides for some time, and great numbers fell, among whom were several distinguished officers; but the gallant and judicious conduct of the Begum compelled the rebels to retire within their works. Thus was the royal army, and also the life of the Emperor, saved by the intrepidity and skill of a woman.*

* I have recently given a sketch of the history of this extraordinary lady in the work before mentioned—"First Impressions," &c., but this passage has not been introduced, or I should not have given it a place in these pages.

HURDWAR.

TEMPLES OF MAHADEO—THE GHAT.

FOLLOWING the sinuous course of the Ganges about fifteen hundred miles from its many mouths, the traveller will arrive at the boundaries of a country far famed for its romantic beauties and its delightful climate; the valley of Dehra Dhoon. It is guarded on the south by the rugged mountains of the Sivalic range, and on the north it is shut out from the rest of the world by the sacred pinnacles of the cloud-piercing Himálas; through its immeasured forests and varied undulations flow the holy streams of the Jumna and the Ganges, and every here and there the soft repose of the scene is relieved by pretty villages dotted along the river bank, or sparkling out from the shady foot of some tower-crowned hill. It forms precisely that style of scenery which the natives (sensible of its charms and delighting to enhance them) select for the resort of nymphs and deities. It is com-

The Great Temple, Bhuteshwar.

London Published Oct. 1, 1836, by Charles Ollier, 59, Fleet Street.

monly said that the Hindoos are indifferent to the fascinations of the picturesque, but in truth it is far otherwise. Without erudition and refinement there is seldom any very quick susceptibility of the charming and the grand in nature, and therefore it would be absurd to look for the same degree of admiration in the untaught savage as is exhibited by the educated of our countrymen; at the same time they have perhaps more than is possessed by the lower orders of the Europeans; and among the high-born and cultivated Hindoos I have witnessed the most expressive rapture at the sight of sublime or of homely-beautiful scenery. Their writings abound with descriptions of landscape; the following quotation will give evidence of their taste. It is from the Bushanda Bamaian.

"In the far recesses of the scented valley of Dwárak rises, in soft and delicate outline, the air-fraught image of the azure mountain, like a celestial spirit assuming the garb of visible substance. Lo! how the gods have crowned their favourite with a dazzling circlet of gold and silver, sun and snow; and in a rich mantle of crimson and green, studded with myriad coloured gems, have altered its graceful forms. The sacred *peeple* and *byr* drop glittering honey from their pendent leaves, and the gathering rills have spread themselves in a shining lake, like diamonds of exquisite brilliancy, that they may together delight themselves with sleepy pastime in the cool shadow. From

the gushing wells a thousand quivering streams dash down the variegated cliffs, formed and transformed into ten thousand clustering globules of countless hues, like Amrit's luscious fruits, when shaken from the rolling car of Suria: thousands of eager birds warble forth rapturous lays among the branches, which stretch to bathe in the delicious waters." Here the poet displays at least a full appreciation of nature's beauty, and if there were no response in the minds of his readers we should not so continually find his words in their mouths.

I have transcribed the above passage not only to corroborate my opinion, but also for the purpose of rendering unnecessary any farther eulogiums upon the charms of the spot to which I am desirous of introducing the reader.

Just where the Ganges, struggling through the Sivalic mountains, pours her stream upon the plains of Hindostan, is situated the holy town of Hurdwar, a place of unequalled sanctity among the Hindoos. To its temples pilgrims resort from every corner of the East where Hindooism is known; and of such excellent virtue is the holy water at this particular spot, that however impure, however sinful, or deeply dyed with crime, a single ablution will purge from all; provided only that sufficient gold be given to the gods. This gold—no baser metal has sufficient virtue—must be dropped in the river at the time of prayer, and the Brahmins are the only people who have the privilege

of draining the sands to search for those few pieces which the gods are pleased to leave them as a reward for their services; and when it is understood that at the *mela*, or annual grand festival, the influx of pilgrims is from three hundred thousand to a million of souls, it will be credited that an extraordinary amount of treasure is collected by these devotees.

Charity of this description is inculcated as the first virtue. A gold mohur, so bestowed, will absolve from the darkest crime as effectually as the severest course of penance; and a bestowal of such offerings will enable a man to continue in the most diabolical practices with impunity. In expiation of any deep offence, the Brahmins sometimes receive a vow from a pilgrim, binding him to give a certain boon to every Brahmin who shall from time to time demand it of him. These vows are doubtless sometimes made in the fulness of remorse, and are sometimes very religiously observed; nay, always to the letter, though not always in the spirit of the vow, the superstitions of the Hindoos preventing their breaking such a solemn obligation, though they are ever ready to adopt the most ingenious devices for escaping the inconvenience of them. There is, however, a notion impressed upon them by the Brahmins, that if the gods do not openly punish such evasions of their oaths, they fail not to circumvent the fraudulent practice, or otherwise indemnify themselves at the expense of the schemer. Numberless are the instances they relate of this conduct on the part of the

deities, who have been content to display their superiority over mortal cunning by turning the devices of their delinquent votaries to their own advantage. There is one tale, the burden of a song familiar to all lovers of Hindostanee music, which appears to me so pretty and ingenious, that I think I shall be excused for introducing it here.

THE BANIA'S VOW.

Near the little village of Mohur-ki-chowki, in the Sivalic range of mountains, beneath a sacred banian tree, whose curved and twining branches, descending to the earth, had taken root and overspread a very large space of ground, there dwelt an aged *bania* (a dealer in grain), who had an only son, of great personal beauty, the heir to his estate and to his entire wealth, which was reputed to be very great, being the produce of a life of diligence, good husbandry, and good fortune. This opulent man delighted in charity, and was beloved by all his neighbours, and had no cause for care or sorrow except in one respect. In the fulness of his love for his child it was evident that he had been over-indulgent, and he became sensible that the youth, whom he had desired to see prudent in all things, and especially in respect of his property, was reckless and prodigal, fond of display, and a gambler. Now the afflicted parent, with all his wealth about him, had little regarded these failings in his darling child, until

he found his own strength declining, and the enfeebling finger of disease warned him that very speedily his improvident son would be deprived of his guidance and protection. Then came serious thoughts and dismal apprehensions, as he found that his most grave injunctions failed to move the lad to an appreciation of his wise sayings, and that his oft-repeated prayers and tearful warnings were equally unavailing. He could not but anticipate that in a few short years after his death his accumulated wealth would be completely squandered, his treasures scattered to the winds, his broad lands, acquired with a whole life's thrift, a prey to remorseless creditors; his child, a ruined debauchee, an outcast, a squalid mendicant.

Finding all his advice utterly without effect upon the hardened youth, the now dying father bethought him how in a measure he might place a restraint upon his prodigal propensities, and having after much deliberation framed the following expedient, he surrounded his couch with Brahmins, and then calling his son, he thus addressed him. "Oh Purwatti, thou art the anguish of thy aged father's soul; thou, whose welfare is far more precious to me than the gain of my whole life, art become the destroyer of my peace. Yet, wilt thou listen to my last words, and remember them? Know then, my son, that fortune stands firm when she has planted her feet, the one upon honesty, the other on prudence; but he who shall withdraw these her supports shall himself be crushed by her

fall. As fire will never be satisfied with wood, neither the ocean with rivers, nor death with his victims, so the wealth of Maia will not be sufficient for thy spendthrift madness. All that is mine is thine, but be thou certain that if I left thee in possession of all the treasures of this world, that which thou shalt expend in benevolence shall alone profit thee. And now lest by evil guidance thou shouldst be cast away, it is thus I make thee my heir. All that is mine is thine; but of thy treasure give daily to the Brahmins one tenth part of the sum which thou hast spent the previous day; rise daily to perform this duty ere the sun be up, and in the day that thou shalt fail thereof, know that the all-powerful Siva has declared by the mouths of these wise men, at the moment of sunrise on that evil day shall thy beauty wither upon thy bones. And that my will may be duly observed, I hereby invest these holy priests with parental authority over thee. If in seeking to avoid their authority thou shouldst resign the humble calling of thy father, or build thee a dwelling greater than this humble cottage, or quit the shadow of this sacred tree, my dying curse go with thee. This is necessary for thy peace, oh Purwatti! for although by the slow fall of water-drops the pot is at length filled, by the fall of the vessel is the water spilled in a second." Having delivered himself of these inspired words, the aged *bania* was carried to the Ganges and expired.

Then, when the spirit had departed, the holy

Brahmins turned to the young man, and with one voice exclaimed, "Is it not written in the Dhurma Shastra, 'Gain all thou canst, and that thou gainest keep, that which thou keepest increase, and that thou increasest bestow in holy sacrifice: so long shalt thou prosper.' And again; 'As the vain and ridiculous see not their own folly in bedecking their feet with gems while their heads are adorned with glass, so is that man blindly contemptible who is content to sport with his riches while he has no love for charity. On the shoulder of such a man sits ruin.'" And with these appropriate words the Brahmins retired.

Purwatti having succeeded to his father's wealth, neglected not to rise daily before the sun as he had been commanded, and with great exactness he continued to dispense to the priests a tithe of what he had spent the day before; until after many months, having become enamoured of a very lovely woman whom he had observed tending cows, he abandoned himself to the enchantment of her beauty, and neglecting the young wife to whom he had been betrothed before his father's death, he lavished immense sums of money upon his new enslaver, so that daily he was compelled to distribute more and more to the Brahmins. This, however, very speedily dissipated all his cash, and finding that his duty to the priest deprived him of much which he wished to bestow upon his favorite, he eluded the obligation, saying that what he gave away as a present could not be said to have been

spent; and thus the Brahmins became suddenly deprived of their largesses.

Years passed away, and Purwatti continued to observe the letter of his father's injunctions, for he was fearful of being in an unwary moment stripped of that manly beauty and vigour in which he so greatly gloried; yet having so long practised an evasion with impunity, he was at last led into a more fatal error. He had become the father of a most lovely child, a daughter, whose surpassing beauty had gained for her the name of Vanadosini, signifying delight of the sacred grove. So resplendent was her face, so perfectly charming was her form, so unrivalled in grace her every movement, so soft, so kind her words, that every man whom fortune permitted to behold her became, from that very moment, like a silken flag borne along upon a staff against the wind; for in whatever course his destiny carried him, still were his thoughts perpetually blown back in one never-varying direction by the constant current of his love and admiration. Beautiful as a celestial nymph, it was not easy to believe her only mortal; her delicate figure was less than the least of women who are not dwarfs; her fairy form, agile as that of the antelope, seemed borne up from the sordid earth by her elastic step; none could behold her without paying instant homage.

Purwatti doted upon his lovely child, and for her sake grew daily more and more careful of his wealth,

so that since the time when he had wooed her mother, he had restrained himself from all absurd extravagance. But it is seldom among the gifts of imperfect mortals to avoid one extreme without falling into the other; if we quit the open road of folly, we are in danger of selecting the bye path across the morass of insidious evil. As Purwatti had been contemptibly prodigal before, so did he now become meanly avaricious and uncharitable; and this failing induced him to study all sorts of deceitful inventions, by which he might defraud the Brahmins of their tithes.

One day a pearl-merchant from Manaar, in the island of Ceylon, having arrived with ornaments of great lustre and value, entered the *bania's* shop to purchase some rice, and beholding the beautiful face of Vanadosini, he became desirous of conversing with so charming a person; he immediately offered to exhibit his costly wares, saying, with the ill grace of one from an uncivilized country, that although the daughter of a *bania* could not be expected to purchase gems of such inestimable price, reserved for the wealthy, still she might be permitted to admire them; and forthwith he laid out before her the richest contents of his jewel case. Now although Vanadosini, whom every one flattered and extolled as far superior to all earthly princesses, was vexed with the rude speech of the merchant, she became absorbed in astonishment at his magnificent treasures, and continued in praise and admiration of each successive ornament which he dis-

played, until she began to wonder what manner of man could be possessed of such immense riches, and yet have learnt so little gallantry among his courtly customers. Upon that thought she turned her eyes upon the countenance of the merchant, whom, hitherto, her modesty had prevented her from regarding. At that moment both were smitten with the shaft of love. Never before had Vanadosini beheld so handsome and so graceful a youth.

But the moment after love had entered the soul of the beautiful girl, that uncourtly speech of the merchant, which had for a moment only touched her vanity, now wounded her pride, and with bitter mortification she feigned anger at the earnest gaze of the stranger. At the same moment she determined to abash him by assuming to herself the importance which she enjoyed among all who were acquainted with her father's wealth.

"Sir merchant," said she with a haughty air of superiority before unknown to her, "Sir merchant, which call you the most costly of these glittering trinkets?"

The merchant, immediately selecting a superb chaplet of exquisite workmanship and most tasteful design, representing an intertwisted wreath of jessamine and orange flowers, wrought with the most splendid pearls of Kondatchi, answered, "This, fair lady, is the most precious. Its price would purchase this whole village, and make slaves of all the inhabi-

tants of the adjacent lands. A lakh of rupees* would scarcely be its worth."

"Then," said Vanadosini, "put that aside for me, I will call my father to pay you for it." A laugh burst from the lips of the unpolished stranger, but the indignant girl stopped not to listen to his words. She hastened to the bamboo grove, where her father was reclining in the shade, smoking his hooka, and throwing herself into his arms, she employed all that winning grace of soft entreaty which she had so often known to be irresistible; but finding more difficulty than she had anticipated, she related to her fond parent the manner in which she had been induced to purchase the chaplet without his previous sanction. Purwatti gently chid her for suffering the words of a stranger to move her, and then, rising, bid her return to the shop, while he called his banker to disburse the amount to the merchant. Vanadosini, twining her lambent arms round her father's neck, bestowed upon him a kiss of fond affection and gratitude, which he told her fully repaid him the price of the chaplet. As she retraced her steps to the cottage with exulting heart, she could not help lamenting that the merchant had not learnt manners as well as her father. With affected coolness and admiration—it was the first time she had ever affected what she did not feel—she told the merchant to seat himself, her father would bring him the price of the trinket immediately. She could

* Ten thousand pounds.

not help remarking the unfeigned surprise of the merchant, which delighted her child-like heart. The pearl-merchant did not sit silent, but so well did he employ the time until Purwatti arrived with the money, that Vanadosini could not but confess within herself that he could talk quite as prettily as her father, and when any thing escaped him which betokened untaught manners, she could not but attribute it to the natural frankness and honest independence of his nature.

Although the pearl-merchant was greatly surprised at the readiness with which the bargain had been made and the immediate promise of payment, he could scarcely believe that a grain merchant living in so humble a cottage could possess wealth sufficient for the purchase of the chaplet, and he therefore expected that the *bania* would make some excuse for declining the bargain, when he should see its exceeding costliness and learn its price. What then was his surprise, when, in a short time, the *bania* and the banker arrived at the door, driving yoked oxen, with the full amount of his demand. His attendance was desired to see the money counted, and he could not but wonder that no attempt was made to abate the amount of his demand, or even the chaplet examined to ascertain its real value. Now it happened that the pearl-merchant, unlike most of his trade, was a truly honest and conscientious man, having these rare good qualities in addition to many other excellent endowments. In mentioning the price of a lakh of rupees for the

chaplet he had spoken at random, without considering the exact demand he ought to make; for he little thought that Vanadosini was able to buy so valuable an ornament: and having cast these things in his mind, while the *lakk* of rupees was being counted, he turned to the *bania* and requested that he would satisfy himself as to the real worth of the trinket: but the *bania* replied that he purchased not the bauble for its worth sake but because his child had desired it, and at the same time he expressed confidence in the fair dealing of the merchant. Then when the money had been told, the merchant desired that seventy thousand rupees only might be made over to him, as that was the precise value of the chaplet, explaining how he had inconsiderately named a larger sum. This candid and generous behaviour of one from whom they so little expected it, whose fellow-dealers are notoriously dishonest, won the admiration and friendship of Purwatti and Bikhari, the banker, who was a man of considerable wealth and influence; and they, expressing these sentiments with much warmth, begged that he would tarry with them a few days, since they were desirous of improving their acquaintance with so excellent a man. They found little persuasion necessary for their purpose as far as it was in his power to comply, but at the same time, he declared his inability to remain beyond the dawn of the next day, since he had a long journey to perform in a very short time; he gladly accepted their hos-

pitality for that day, for his heart beat tumultuously when he thought of departing from the mango grove. During the short time the pearl-merchant remained with them he gained more and more upon their esteem, until when night grew on apace and free communion had opened their hearts, while the fragrant hooka had cheered their spirits, the pearl-merchant, turning abruptly upon his host, exclaimed, "O, Purwatti *bania*, excuse the liberty of my speech, but I pray you inform me is that most beautiful daughter of yours betrothed?" "No," replied the *bania* shortly, "wherefore should a stranger seek to know aught of his host's family affairs?"

"Wherefore! It is because the super-human grace and beauty of the fawn-eyed Vanadosini have transfixed me as with a shaft, and have rent my heart with the fretful wound of desperate love. O Bania, be not incensed at my rash disclosure, but why should my passion consume me, and I remain aloof from the only chance of aid? I offend thee; but bear with my unseemly precipitance, and hear what I have to say. If I be wanting in honour or respect, abhor me; if I be found worthy, forbear thy displeasure. Twelve virtues are needful for the man who shall be accounted a fit husband for your lovely daughter: he must be pure, faithful, honest, comely, prosperous, mild, diligent, patient, generous, good-tempered, full of confidence, and devoted; and I pray thee deem it not an immodest assurance of

my own worth, that I say, if I can prove myself possessed of each of these good qualities, receive me for thy son. I have considerable riches, and am of thy own caste. Wherefore should I not speak openly?"

The *bania* arose, and warmly embraced the pearl-merchant. "If," said he, "you can make all these virtues your own within twelve months, Vanadosini shall be yours also, and an ample dower shall go with her." With much cordiality, the new friends separated; and the next morning, long before day-break, the pearl-merchant had departed on his way.

Throughout the night, Purwatti's repose was greatly disturbed with anxious speculations concerning his beloved child's future life, and though he entertained the highest admiration of the pearl-merchant, he could not but regard with caution so great a stranger. If, thought he, this man can render himself worthy of her love, he shall marry her; and upon this thought he began to calculate what sum of money he should be able to lavish upon her; then covetousness taking possession of him, led him to regret all that he must bestow here or there, without being able to add it to the heap of treasure with which he should present her. Then he remembered the seven thousand rupees which he was bounden to pay to the Brahmins before sun-rise on the morrow, as the tenth part of the amount he had expended upon the chaplet; but the demon of avarice took power over his heart, and he, having long endeavoured, without success, to frame some

available mode of escaping the payment, at last—fortune having averted her face—determined boldly to disregard the fulfilment of his father's injunction, believing that he had so long practised deception, that open neglect would now remain unnoticed. Having comforted his mind with this reflection, he fell asleep, and did not awake until nearly sun-rise, when, turning upon his pillow, he again endeavoured to woo oblivion; but the misgivings of a not-quite-hardened conscience suffered him not to rest, and made him hesitate whether he would not still rise and discharge his dues to the Brahmins. While his mind still hovered between duty and inclination, a brilliant burst of sun-light shot into the room; and Vanadosini entering, no sooner beheld her father's countenance, than, with an agonized scream, she sunk senseless upon the floor of the room.

Then the amazed father was suddenly overcome with terror, for his conscience forewarned him of evil, though he knew not what had befallen him. He hastily rose, and with tender solicitude hurried to his daughter's assistance; but when he stretched out his arms to raise her, he was stricken aghast with horror on beholding the shrunken deformity of his own limbs as they remained extended. Trembling and faint, unmanned by his sudden conviction of the dire calamity which had overtaken him, now shocked and dismayed at his unholy defiance of his dying father's most solemn charge, he cast himself beside his child, and remained

Temples of Mahadeo, on the Sewalic Mountains

for a long time in a paroxysm of mental agony. I love not to depict the tortures of the deeply afflicted: let this suffice; he endured the penalty of his disobedience to the extreme of his father's imprecation.

For many days a malignant fever prostrated the energies of the unfortunate Purwatti, but with the first return of sufficient reason and strength, firmly casting off his repugnance to be seen by his neighbours in his lamentable disfigurement, he took a staff in his hand, and bent his feeble steps towards certain temples of Mahadeo, situated upon the heights above his cottage, which, owing to their great antiquity and the character of the attendant Brahmins, were held in high veneration by the devout, and had been from time immemorial a favourite resort of the inhabitants of the surrounding country, whenever they required the prayers or advice of the priests; for these men were reputed to be skilful both as bodily and spiritual physicians.

The temples are in themselves beautiful objects, both on account of their picturesque form and position, and also as fine specimens of the force and merit of ancient Hindoo sculpture; many of the figures with which they are adorned, although originally but roughly hewn, and now crumbling with decay, being admirably spirited and full of energy, albeit the postures and proportions are somewhat extravagant. The ornaments upon the exterior are very elaborate, but consist chiefly of flowers and

running border patterns, deeply carved; the material is red sandstone, and the form of the buildings is peculiar to all temples dedicated to Mahadeo in this part of the country, a high quadrangular figure, surmounted with a conical roof. From a highly elevated spot in the Sivalic hills, they command a great extent of beautifully undulated country, finely wooded with gigantic trees, watered with many streams, and in some parts richly cultivated. The style of scenery is charming and grand beyond description; I only regret that my pencil was unequal to the task of conveying a full idea of its many and varied beauties. Such as it is, however, I trust the accompanying sketch will enhance the reader's interest in my tale.

It was with great labour and fatigue, and only by slow advances that Purwatti was able to reach the site of these sacred temples. Wholly subdued by remorse and affliction, a thousand vows were made upon his painful journey, and as he drew more and more near to his destination, he found that the nervous anxiety under which he laboured so greatly impeded his progress, by the prostration of his remaining strength, that he almost despaired of accomplishing his object. Renewed hope occasionally lent him such a measure of energy as at last brought him to the temples. He came in quest of the Brahmins, and found them assembled upon

a terrace of holy ground shaded by an overhanging *byr* tree; but they knew him not until he had declared himself. Having received the benefit of their prayers and religious consolation, he sent for Bikhari the banker, and bestowed upon the priests a *lahk* of rupees, the full price of the chaplet; and with the chaplet itself he begged them to adorn the image of the god, as the free offering of his daughter.

In answer to his enquiries, however, he was assured that no sacrifice or penance, but death alone, could remove the burden of his punishment. "Yet," said he, "here under the shadow of these holy temples do I solemnly bind myself henceforth to devote daily unto the gods one half of the amount which I may have spent the previous day; and further, I vow to give to every Brahmin, or religious pilgrim, who shall demand it, a handful of the finest meal, as often as they may require it for their own use or for the gods."

The Brahmins having heard with delight this vow of the penitent Purwatti, by which they anticipated that great riches would come to their temples, not only as the gift of Purwatti, but also by increasing their renown as persons of wonderful sanctity, became anxious lest when he should have an opportunity for cool consideration, when time should have assuaged the bitterness of his misery, he should again backslide, and leave his solemn promises unperformed. One of them, therefore, hoping to persuade

him to grant them such control over his property as would enable them to exact a strict observance of the vow, thus addressed him:—

"O! Purwatti, let no mortal trust in his own foresight. How has thine own most sad experience taught thee? Hast thou at all times had it in thy power, even when thy will and thy duty were at peace, to fulfil with sufficient faithfulness thy own vows or the sacred injunctions of thy dying father? Frequently, when the good intentions of men are most forward, ability is at the ebb; and again, when the power is at hand inclination is sometimes wanting. Take warning by the past, and let not thy safety depend solely upon thine own strength; but invest us, thy trusty friends, with authority to provide for the exact performance of these sacred obligations. Have you not had awful proof that the wisdom of one man is abject folly? Wisdom and discretion are only to be found in the council of many. Is it not truly said, that the knowledge of a wise man may be turned into folly by the concurrent testimony of two or three fools? Listen, Purwatti, to the story of

THE BRAHMIN AND HIS GOAT,

and you will immediately acknowledge the truth of what I have said. It will be seen that even a Brahmin was led to distrust his own senses by the impudent lying of three knaves. Who then can venture to

repose confidence in the infallibility of his single wisdom?

"In former days, as at this time, these holy temples were served by many Brahmins of such extraordinary piety and wisdom, of such pure and heavenly lives, that all the world was crying out, saying, 'Whence came all these devout and sapient persons?' The whole country, far and near, resounded with the echoes of their praise, and they were sought by all who had need either of bodily or spiritual advice. But Genesa, the great god of wisdom, is often pleased to expose the shallowness of mortal judgment and foresight, when his just wrath is excited by man's impious assumption of his attributes.

"Among the number of these excellent Brahmins was one whose name was Suryaput, a man of such superior learning and skill, acquired by great labour and devotion to his sacred studies during a long life, that he was always consulted in cases of emergency; and being raised to the holy dignity of chief-priest, he became an oracle, speaking the will of the divine Mahadeo. In fact, this extraordinary man was as much an object of veneration among the priests as to the vulgar: and yet he fell from the tower of his greatness. Self-sufficiency and conceit found a lurking-place in the heart of this gifted and once pious Brahmin, and speedily manifested themselves in his contemptuous and overbearing behaviour to the rest of the priesthood. Vanity and self-love unhappily

taught him to pour ridicule upon the ancient laws and observances of his high office; he brought disgrace upon the Vedas, as well as upon the servants of the gods, by laughing to scorn the forms of devotion which they inculcated, and by introducing into our holy worship the most blasphemous doctrines, and certain impious rites which were the invention of his own intoxicated brain. For a time he endeavoured to force the practice of these unhallowed things upon the priests of the temple, but finding that they were ready to oppose his designs, he cried aloud to the people to follow him, for that he possessed power with the gods to obtain for them every thing which they might desire; at the same time denouncing the venerable ordinances of their ancient faith as a tissue of ignorance and imposition.

"Then, having drawn after him an immense concourse of blinded and admiring devotees, he quitted the steps of these sacred buildings, and made himself a temple within the trunk of yonder hollow tree, where he established new ceremonies and preached a new doctrine in direct hostility to his former professions; thus devoting to perdition the thousands of foolish persons who were won over to his cause by the splendour of his promises.

"Among many other absurdities practised with a view to his own profit, he pretended that the sacrifice of a young goat was necessary, every time he had occasion to call upon the gods; and that he might offer such

only as should be acceptable, he made it necessary that he should select and purchase the goat himself, for which purpose he was supplied with money by all who sought his assistance; and thus doubtless he filled his coffers and his stomach at the expense of his followers. But the gods did not long suffer themselves to be mocked. This wicked Brahmin stood alone, and his fall came speedily.

"One day, having been into the market to purchase a goat, Suryaput was returning with the animal slung over his shoulder, when he was espied, from behind a thicket, by three *dukhaits* (robbers), who having travelled far, and being very hungry, coveted the goat. 'Yet,' said one of them, 'behold this man is a Brahmin; we may not lay hands on him. If he were a common person, we would slay him, and feast upon the goat; but now we must restrain our hands. How fat is that young goat, and how delicious a curry would his flesh furnish to appease our hunger! Yet must we suffer it to go by untouched.'

"'Truly,' said the second *dukhait*, 'this is a Brahmin, and therefore we cannot by any means possess ourselves of the goat.—Let the holy man depart unmolested.'

"'Not so,' said the third, who was an old man, 'although I should be as unwilling as either of you to do any violence to this Brahmin, still I can see no possible objection to our obtaining the goat by the exercise of stratagem. Have we not a familiar saying,

That two or three fools may defeat a wise man?—Let us try our wits upon this sage. I have a scheme to propose which, if it should fail, let your ingenuity attempt something better.' Then, having consulted together, they separated, and went by a circuitous path, and placed themselves at distant intervals in the road over which the Brahmin was travelling, so that each might meet him separately, as if by accident.

"Suryaput, who knew nothing of these *dukhaits*, or their affection for his goat, was walking leisurely along the road, possibly exulting inwardly at the success of his secession from his brother Brahmins, and the consequent fame and wealth which accrued to him; when, at an abrupt turn of the road, he was suddenly met by a stranger, the smiling and pleasant expression of whose countenance, as they came face to face, was quickly changed to that of amazement; then doubt was evident in his gaze; but a narrow scrutiny of the goat upon Suryaput's shoulder renewed his astonishment, which was immediately followed by a look of horror; for all which the bewildered Brahmin could not possibly account, until the stranger moving back a pace or two, and casting aloft his eyes and extended hands to heaven, cried aloud in accents of pity and lamentation, 'Oh, woe, woe! Behold a Brahmin has gone mad, and deliberately pollutes himself by the touch of a filthy dog!'

"'A dog!' replied Suryaput, with great indignation; 'call you this fat goat a dog?' Then pointing to the

hoofs of the hind legs, which he had in his grasp, he burst into a scornful laugh, exclaiming, 'Fool! are these the feet of a dog?' But the stranger replied not, except by a look of the most heart-felt commiseration, and each proceeded on his way.

"Suryaput walked on about half a *kos* farther, thinking over the singular mistake of the stranger, and having his eyes cast upon the ground. He had just expressed aloud his conviction of the traveller's unhappy state of mind, muttering as he went,—'A dog indeed! Mad! mad!' when he was met by a second traveller, who on approaching him, and fixing his eyes upon the goat, shrunk back as if in horror at the sight; and then holding out his hand as if to arrest his progress, he cried, 'Alas! alas! how shocking! Behold, a sacred Brahmin defiles himself by carrying upon his back the foulest of unclean beasts! Oh horrible! horrible! that a Brahmin should carry a dog!'

"Suryaput stopped short, utterly confounded at this second inexplicable occurrence. Then putting down the goat, he looked at it again and again, and seeing that it had indeed the form of a goat, he stretched out his hand, unwilling to trust the evidence of a single sense, and felt the beast's horns. 'It *is* a goat,' cried he. 'Maa-a-a-a,' cried the goat. 'Idiot!' exclaimed the enraged Brahmin. 'Have I neither eyes, nor hands, nor ears?'"

"'Alas! alas!' said the stranger, 'how melancholy! the dog barked, and the poor madman mistook its voice

for that of a goat. Poor fellow!' and turning aside, he passed the Brahmin as if he feared to be polluted by his touch.

"'Ah, ah!' said Suryaput, as he again took the goat upon his shoulder, "'tis laughable that two madmen should have mistaken my goat for a dog; but the longer we live, the stranger things we see and hear. These men perchance were brothers, born with the same deficiency of reason, and——but here is an aged fellow coming; he cannot be a brother; he has the air and appearance of a goat-herd; perhaps he will offer to purchase my goat.'

"As the old man approached the Brahmin, he prepared to accost him, making a humble salaam, and putting off his shoes to receive the priest's blessing; but suddenly, as his eye fell upon the goat, he started back, overcome with disgust and abhorrence; then averting his head, and clasping his hands as if in an agony of grief, he cried out, 'Ah, woe is me! what evil have I done, that my eyes should behold this infamous sight! Is this Brahmin mad, or does he wilfully desecrate his sacred birth and holy office by carrying a dog as if for sacrifice. O horrible, horrible!'

"Suryaput, hearing this fearful accusation for the third time, believed that a judgment had come upon him for his iniquitous desertion of his former faith, and the sacred rites of that religion which he knew to be pure and infallible. Believing that Genesa had cast a deceitful veil over his senses, and had thus permitted him

to become polluted, the conscience-smitten Suryaput threw down the goat in a paroxysm of despair and penitential remorse, and with loud cries of distress he fled to these temples, and cast himself prostrate before the altars which his overweening vanity and covetousness had induced him to forsake.

"Thus the three *dukhaits*, by the repetition of a lie, made the wise Brahmin believe that his goat was in truth a dog, and in this manner they obtained possession of it. So that you see even the wisest of us are not at all times infallible."

Purwatti having listened to this account of the Brahmin Suryaput, became fully convinced that it would be for his own good, and the security of his welfare, to place in the hands of the Brahmins such an instrument as would enable them to enforce an implicit observance of his vows, lest in a weak moment he should become a defaulter to the gods; and having thus done, he returned to his own house, and sought consolation in the soft affection of his darling child, who soon became, if possible, more and more dear to him; albeit, an unreasonable person might have upbraided her as the indirect cause of his misfortune.

Tidings of the *bania's* vow having spread far and wide through the country, from temple to temple, from Brahmin to Brahmin, from pilgrim to pilgrim, all religious devotees who sought shelter beneath the sacred banian tree,—and at certain seasons there were

daily many thousands,—failed not to apply at the *bania's* shop for his handful of fine meal, so that he was compelled to appoint a slave whose sole occupation was the distribution of this charity: thus not only did the expenditure become enormous, but his trade was ruinously impeded, and his repose completely destroyed through the continual pressure of the noisy multitude around his cottage. Under these unhappy circumstances, the wretched Purwatti found his treasure daily decreasing without the possibility of his escaping the ultimate ruin which stared him in the face.

In the midst of his sorrows, he was again visited by the pearl-merchant, who condoled with him on his sad misfortunes, and endeavoured to inspire him with hope; he persuaded him to accompany him one day's journey to Hurdwar, there to consult the holiest Brahmins of that sacred place, and to try the virtue of ablution at the renowned *ghát* of Hari. To this proposal Purwatti gladly assented; but having presented himself before those devout persons, he related to them the history of his misfortunes, and having distributed large sums of money, having bathed continually, received their loudest blessings, and been the incessant object of their prayers, he was at last informed, that the Brahmins of his native village had not erred in their assurance that the persecutions of his destiny would only cease with death. The pearl-merchant, however, would not permit the despair

Engraved by J. Redaway

of Purwatti to overpower his hopes, and urged upon him with great zeal and affection, that he should accompany him on his voyage down the Ganges to Siva's * chosen city, Benares; and from thence, if he should have gained no relief from his woes, he strenuously pleaded that he should accompany him to the most holy island of Ceylon. To this Purwatti would have objected the impossibility of quitting his home without incurring the farther curse of his father; but the pearl-merchant removed his doubts, recommending him to leave his daughter under the protection of the Brahmins as a pledge of his intention to return; and although sore at heart to tear himself from his darling child, he at last yielded a reluctant consent to accompany the pearl-merchant; for a spark of hope yet lingered in his breast, since he regarded his calamities as almost beyond mortal endurance, and altogether too severe to be strictly enforced upon him by the gods without some measure of remission.

When Purwatti and the pearl-merchant returned to Vanadosini, they communicated to her the news of her father's resolution, which almost broke the tender heart of that fond and gentle child; for she had a double source of anxiety in the departure of the travellers, the pearl-merchant having become daily more dear to her soul. On the eve of their journey, Purwatti, having

* Siva and Mahadeo are names indiscriminately applied to the same deity. The former, perhaps, is more generally used in Bengal, and the latter in the western provinces.

summoned the Brahmins from the temples of Mahadeo, informed them of his projected pilgrimage, and after he had solemnly committed his precious child to their protection, he told them, that in her hands he placed the power of drawing all such sums of money as his friend Bikhari, the banker, should conceive to be really necessary to the strict performance of his vow.

When he had completed his arrangements, the *bania* retired to his sleepless couch, and there during the slow and silent hours of the night he continued in painful meditation, until this unhappy thought entered his mind. If, said he within himself, my return should be longer delayed than I anticipate; if sudden death should overtake me in the dangerous straits of my pilgrimage, and the entire remnants of my once ample wealth become exhausted in my absence, what will become of my sweet child? And with this bitter consideration he continued a long time in ungovernable anguish. At last, starting from his couch, "Ah, ah!" cried he aloud, with a wild tortured laugh, "Ah, ah! thus will I at least protract this fearful evil. The hand of that overgrown slave whom in my blind folly I have appointed to dispense the fine meal is as the hand of a giant, and the villain, delighting in the hideous prospect of my downfal, employs tenfold his natural activity in dealing forth the bounty; but who among mortals has a hand so delicately small as that of my most precious Vanadosini? Ah, ah! in the narrow doorway of my shop will I erect a seat for her ere I depart, and there

shall she daily take her place, and with the tiny measure of her soft hand deal forth a religious quittance of my vow. A single maund of fine meal will thus supply tenfold as many as now demand my charity in the course of the whole day. Ten thousand blessings wait upon the propitious genius who granted me that saving thought." And immediately on this ingenious conceit the exulting Purwatti arose, and constructed a seat for his daughter in the narrow doorway, where she might without inconvenience distribute her handful of meal to each applicant. "There will I leave her, while my wealth is again accumulating in the hands of Bikhari, and on my return with the pearl-merchant, there shall I find her still seated, performing her father's vow to the gods."

When the day dawned, having given his daughter instructions regarding her duties, the father disengaged himself from her tearful embrace, and the pearl-merchant took an affectionate but respectful leave; and thus the travellers departed on their laborious journey, which at the nearest calculation must be no less a distance than four thousand miles to travel over ere they could return, and this they hoped to accomplish in a year.

Immediately on her father's departure, the beautiful Vanadosini, although bathed in tears and overwhelmed with anxious apprehensions for those whom she loved so tenderly, found it necessary to enter upon her new duties; and as each successive Brahmin arrived

with a request for his handful of meal, nothing could exceed his surprise on beholding that most lovely of women, with her own sweet little hand distributing Purwatti's bounty. They saw through his fraudulent intention, but considering themselves more than abundantly recompensed for their short measure by the honour of receiving it from so fair and delicate a hand, and for the sake of a look at so exquisite a beauty, they felt disposed neither to blame nor to regret Purwatti's cunning expedient, but the rather extolled his prudence. But above all, every mouth was filled with rapturous praises of the incomparable Vanadosini; the fame of her charms spread with astonishing celerity through all parts of the country, and multitudes flocked daily to obtain a sight of her; many exalted her with celestial attributes, and as her votaries daily increased, divine homage was paid to her by thousands. Artless and unaffected as was the sweet girl who excited all this ferment of admiration and devotion, she could not remain uninformed of its meaning, and not daring to disobey her parent's commands, she naturally had recourse to a veil, which so completely enveloped her person as to leave not the least view of her, except only the little hand with which the fine meal was measured. This expedient, however, far from removing the annoyance of her importunate slaves, rather excited their curiosity and inflamed their imaginations, so that her trials were daily increased; and in the midst of the wild tumult

which from morning until night polluted the sacred shadow of the banian tree, she was compelled to make patience her only comfort. The Brahmins, under whose charge she had been placed by Purwatti, were compelled to take active measures for her protection, which could only be effected by surrounding the *bania's* cottage with a powerful body of armed men. These required, of course, a large sum of money for their support; the Brahmins, too, required a handsome remuneration for their constant attendance and arduous duties, and these things, together with the absolute loss of all trade, and the countless and never-ending pilgrims and devotees who crowded upon Vanadosini for the meal, made daily most ruinous depredation upon the remaining property of the absent Purwatti, and it was obvious that ere long not a rupee would be left. This was matter of sincere grief and distress to Bikhari, the banker, who, at the same time could devise no scheme for the avoidance of the impending ruin; besides, he, a devout and conscientious person, could not interfere with the fulfilment of his friend's vow, and religiously trusted to the favour of the gods for the support and protection of Vanadosini.

More than twelve months had now elapsed since the travellers had taken their departure, and yet they came not. Fear and dire anxiety took possession of poor Vanadosini, when she thought what might be the fate of those so dear to her; added to this, con-

stant care, trial, and fatigue, together with a knowledge of the utter ruin of her father, produced a sad effect upon her health and bewildered her mind; the colour fled her beautiful cheek, the life of her smile departed, her soft eyes were bedimmed with tears, and her finely-rounded form was gradually robbed of its loveliest perfections. At length, for the first time, she appeared not, at the long looked-for hour of sunrise, to repay the anxious watching of the throng; an alarming fever and delirium had laid her delicate form prostrate on the bed of sickness; but in her place came Bikhari, and with trembling voice, and downcast heart and looks, declared to them, that not a fraction of Purwatti's wealth remained in his treasury. A general response of lamentation and compassion was uttered by the crowd, and with prayers for the recovery of Vanadosini, and for the safe return of her now almost sainted father, they gradually dispersed.

Scarcely had they all withdrawn from the cover of the banian tree, when the arrival of Purwatti and the pearl-merchant was announced to the honest Bikhari, who hastened to greet them, delighted to be relieved from the weight of his fears on their account. With cautious delicacy he communicated to them the evils which Purwatti, by his own pernicious device, had called down from heaven upon his house; and the unfortunate man, execrating himself for his delinquency, could not but confess the justice of his punishment, and having invoked forgiveness of the gods, he

exclaimed, "Through vice and folly, through cupidity and unreasonable affection for our own flesh and blood, come sorrow and bereavement. Thus is wisdom taught to the blind. Be warned, O my son; youth, wealth, fraud, and an inconsiderate action, will each of them occasion danger. What measure of disaster then will not be accomplished by all four of them in conjunction? Among all possessions, experience and example appear pre-eminently valuable; by the wise they are called supreme riches; because they can never be lost, stolen, or destroyed; and as, by the company of gold, even glass acquires the brilliancy of a gem, so, by the society of the wise and good, are the less perfect made to shine. And again, whosoever is watchful to restrain his evil propensities, who speaks considerately, who acts advisedly, a dutiful child, a conscientious parent, these for a thousand years give birth to no misfortune; but mark the respective situations of him who eats inordinately and of the food which he devours; do you not discern the short friendship and the total destruction of both." Having thoughtfully pronounced these words of wisdom, Purwatti hastened to embrace his drooping child.

The return of her father went far to restore both the bodily and mental disease of Vanadosini, and in a few days she was seen reclining by his side beneath the deep shade of the circling banian, in company with the pearl-merchant and Bikhari. The subject of conversation was evidently one of absorbing interest

to each of the group; and the mantling blush and modest smile of Vanadosini would alone have suggested what the raised voice of the pearl-merchant at length declared. "All, all is hers and yours, Purwatti; that by the favour of the gods I am prosperous, you are right well aware; and now, after so long and severe a trial of my heart and disposition, judge for yourself whether I am possessor of the other eleven virtues which I named to you. O speak, and tell me that from henceforth the shade of this sacred tree shall be my home."

"Henceforth thou know'st not in what youthful play
Our days, beguiled with pleasure, swam away;
Gay songs and cheerful tales deceived the time,
And circling goblets made a tuneful chime;
Sweet was the draft, and sweet the blooming maid,
Who touched her lyre beneath the fragrant shade."*

* Translated from the Arabic by Sir William Jones.

KUNKHUL.

About two miles below Hurdwar, upon the same side of the Ganges, is the town of Kunkhul, deriving no little sanctity from its proximity to that most sacred of places. The more wealthy and the higher castes of the Hindoos who visit Hurdwar usually encamp at Kunkhul, to avoid the tumult and other innumerable annoyances inseparable from the concourse of Hindoos. Here too they can enjoy open space, and, with a little interest, gain admission to some beautiful gardens belonging to the temples. The town consists principally of one broad handsome street, formed by a succession of showy fronts and highly decorated gateways, which, like those at Hurdwar, appear to be built more for the purpose of shutting out the mean and dirty hovels of the owners, than for the purposes of habitation. On either side of the street is a high terrace, for the erection of stalls at the festival; these, together with balconies and arcaded galleries, projecting from all parts of the buildings, afford excellent

accommodation to the spectators of the religious processions which parade the sunken road.

The temples are numerous, but I am not aware that there are any of particular celebrity. That represented in the little vignette of this volume stands upon the Ganges bank in front of the *madrissa*, or ancient college; I was induced to sketch it, not only for the sake of its picturesque position, but also on account of the peculiar style of its pointed roof, which I believe to be perfectly unique. I have never seen its like, or any thing resembling its form, in India, and am somewhat at a loss to understand how the roof is supported, there being no jambs or buttresses to resist the lateral pressure, which, it is evident, from its concave form, must be very great. It is constructed entirely of very small bricks, plastered over with white stucco, and ornamented with mouldings and cornices of red sandstone. It has apparently been a structure of much importance, but has fallen into neglect and consequent decay: though an image of Krishna is still within, I believe, it is seldom or never used for devotional purposes. The lower chamber is encumbered with rubbish, and over-grown with rank moss, being, without doubt, a very favourite haunt of the families of snakes, and lurking scorpions; while the upper apartment, to which access is gained by a flight of decayed steps in the rear, has become the privileged resort of bats and noisome vampires. The platform round this room has once been fenced

with a handsome balustrade of carved stone, but few fragments of it are now left.

My sketch of this temple was made on the morning of one of those fresh and delicious days with which this part of the country is favored even in April. Having completed my task, I jumped upon my pony, who pleased to have been spared the usual form of having his servant in attendance, had been nibbling the sprouting grass upon the banks; then setting off in search of a new subject for my pencil, I was galloping at a round pace over the broken ground and ragged remnants of antiquity, when I came suddenly upon a group of natives, evidently confabulating upon matters of moment and excitement. Upon the summit of a small knoll, under the shadow of a gigantic peeple tree, sat five well looking Brahmins face to face in a circle, engaged in earnest discussion; immediately at the foot of the tree stood a tall, and I fancied rather a graceful female, whom, though closely veiled, I should also have guessed to be youthful, and by her side a man of no prepossessing figure or countenance, thick set, awkward, and in feature ugly and villanous. At a short distance from them, immediately without the circle formed by the wise men in conclave, stood a comely youth with downcast eye and abashed demeanor, which betokened some cause for confusion, beyond his presence before the venerable Brahmins, or the gaze of the crowd of spectators who had gathered around the group. He however appeared to reply to

the questions of his examiners without hesitation, although his voice was unsteady with emotion; and there was an impetuosity of manner, mingled with occasional glances of hatred, contempt, and revenge, cast at the man who stood beside the female, which proved that his disquietude was not entirely on his own account. I enquired of the by-standers the meaning of the scene, and was informed that the Brahmins formed a *panchaiut*, or council of five, for the trial of the female, who, it appears, had excited the jealousy of her husband, the forbidding person who stood beside her. The youth was he who shared her suspicions, and the guilt of the parties having been pretty clearly established in the opinion of the Brahmins, he was now giving evidence of the inhuman conduct of the husband towards his wife. As he proceeded in his story, he recounted various acts of barbarity on the part of the man, which moved the listeners to indignation and verbal abuse; to which however the husband only replied with looks of hardy defiance. When the lad had finished his statement, he called witnesses, who proved his assertions, and he then took a most solemn oath of his and the woman's innocence, and he was immediately put to the test of ordeal; which consisted simply in requiring him to eat a handful of dry barley; he performed his task much to the satisfaction of his judges, and this was sufficient to acquit him from any sort of punishment.

The woman was then called upon to undergo the

same mode of trial, and with a trembling step she advanced to the council. She then by their desire uncovered her head, displaying a remarkably interesting, if not decidedly handsome face, and winning the sympathy of all the by-standers by her modest and graceful behaviour. Many and fervent, I am certain, were the prayers put up in her behalf, to the effect that she might escape punishment by passing the ordeal. Whether it is to be attributed to her nervousness and confusion, or whether indeed she was guilty while the boy was innocent, certain it is, that after having for a long time masticated the barley and made repeated efforts to swallow it, she found herself quite unable to accomplish it; and as her inability became apparent, her efforts grew less and less effectual, until at last, in utter despair, and overwhelmed with fear and shame, she sunk fainting upon the ground. Water was sprinkled upon her face, and she was made to drink a small quantity, after which she in a measure revived; and then, being supported by two of the multitude, at a signal given by the Brahmins, a barber stepped into the ring, and lock by lock cut from her head her splendid hair, which reached almost to her feet; having so done, he completed the operation by shaving her head; and then the principal Brahmin, rising, addressed the multitude, exhorting them to avoid all crime, more especially that for which this woman was punished; for that the loss of honor in such cases must be punished by the loss of that which

usually led to the evil, beauty. Hereupon the barber again stepped forward, and taking from the implements of his craft a small pair of shears, he dexterously applied them to the poor sufferer's face, and, ere she understood his intention, he had severed her nose from her face. A slight cry of pain escaped her, and gathering her white *chuddur* around her, she seated herself on the grass, apparently overcome with faintness, occasioned by her acute mental and bodily suffering, and the rapid loss of blood which followed the last operation.

This is by no means an uncommon punishment for inconstancy in the western provinces of Hindostan. I have more than once seen it inflicted; and in one instance it was executed upon the wife of a groom in the service of one of my brother officers, when there was no proof of the charge, but only of trifling conduct. It is a most fallacious idea, which appears to be generally received among Europeans, that the Hindoos are indifferent to the virtue of their countrywomen, or that they are unable to appreciate the charming excellence of modesty. I will venture to affirm, without fear of contradiction from those who have had sufficient opportunities of forming a fair judgment, that except among those classes where the females are born to dishonour, there are none among civilized nations more scrupulously delicate in these matters than are the much libelled Hindoos; and more especially the higher castes of them. If it be

suggested that the shameless indecencies of many of their religious rites argue a depravity of their minds, I can with confidence declare that this is disproved by experience. That these revolting doctrines spring from utter pollution of heart and manners is manifest, but it may be daily seen that their observance of them is performed in complete simplicity. It does not appear to enter their heads that there is any thing like indecency in what has from childhood been taught them as part of their religion.

HIMALA MOUNTAINS.

THE Himála Mountains are so called from the everlasting snows with which they are crowned; the word signifying "palace of snow;" they are otherwise named by the natives Himlá, Himádri, or Himáchil, the sense of each being nearly the same. The most romantic descriptions which could be lavished upon their beauties, the most powerful pictures of the poet or the artist, must fall short of anything like the truth, in attempting to convey an idea of the stupendous and almost supernatural wonders of these sublime regions. The pen in the hand of an ordinary writer is utterly inadequate, is at once laid aside as soon as the wish to describe has been formed; the brush even of a skilful artist is almost as useless; the highest flights of the imagination are unequal to the grand reality. To see, alone, is to appreciate the magnificent splendour of the scenery; even memory fails to retain it; for again

and again, after having beheld, we are astonished, when we return, to find the interminable range still more and more gigantic, more and more varied in richness of the beautiful and the picturesque.

The plate represents a view of the great cone and the peaks of Jumnoutri, as seen from the neighbourhood of Budrajh, upon the banks of a small stream tributary to the Jumna. Viewed from this spot, the great cone, which may be recognized by its peculiarly regular figure, appears to be almost in contact with Jumnoutri peaks, and to the eastward of them; while in truth it is full fifteen miles distant to the northward.

In Jumnoutri, as the name implies, the sacred Jumna has its source, and here the infant stream, which, near its junction with the Ganges, is from two to three thousand yards in breadth, ripples through a narrow channel over which a man may stride. The spot at which it issues from the snow, under an enormous cavern of icicles, is about seventeen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The mountain has three peaks, which, from their lateral position, in the drawing are not distinctly visible: of these the centre is the highest, and is computed 25,500 feet above the level of the sea. The aspect of the mountain upon the north and south sides differs wonderfully; on the south it is comparatively shelving, and is clothed with wood to the height of eleven thousand feet, while on the north it is rugged, barren, and precipitous; not even a shrub is found at a greater altitude than nine or

ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. The formation is gneiss, intersected with beds of granite, and no volcanic matter whatever is found, though several travellers have discovered perfect ammonites (not salgram stones) in the neighbourhood of the hot springs; they are common at the height of ten thousand feet. The village of Jumnoutri is on the banks of the river, close to a number of these springs, and is considered a spot of remarkable sanctity; Hindoos who perform the pilgrimage from the low countries being themselves almost deified after the adventure. The temples are insignificant. From this place the river becomes somewhat more important, and gathering force at every valley, dashes down its precipitous channel, leading a most zig-zag course, until it unites its waters with the Tansa; whence, rolling down a vast volume of water, it soon bursts upon the plain of the Dhoon, on the borders of the great forest, where the Emperor Shah Jehan, about two hundred years ago, built a magnificent sporting residence, for the purpose of pursuing the wild elephants, tigers, and the whole world of *ferœ naturæ*, who here find hiding places.

The great cone is more than twenty-one thousand feet in height above the level of the sea; in the ravines upon its sides are the springs which, accumulating at one point, form the river Tansa, one of the largest streams within the mountains, and celebrated for its magnificent falls, one of which is one hundred and eighty feet perpendicular, without interruption, so

that ere the water reaches the bottom, more than half of it ascends in vapour, and furnishes continual moisture to the luxuriant vegetation around. Along the banks of this river are a race of Hindoos, who, like the Parsees, worship the sun; the devout among them will on no account taste food while the orb is above the horizon, and many are found who refuse to seat themselves during the day, while the sun is visible, which, during all the summer months, is from his rising until his setting, this season being cloudy.

It is common in these parts for the women to be blessed with a plurality of husbands; some of them have as many as six or seven. When a woman has been fortunate enough to gain one who is comparatively opulent, she is sure to attract a large number of suitors, since she regulates her husband's household, and disposes of his wealth at her pleasure; it is said, that she will often put her well-to-do lord and master upon short commons, while she heaps favour upon the poorest, if they respectively deserve such treatment. The men appear to be as devoted and submissive as the wives are imperious; for at festivals, and on other public occasions, it is usual for the women to take the lead, followed by their proper retinue of husbands, who take precedence entirely at her good will and pleasure; and it is not at all an unusual thing for a wife to send three or four of her husbands off in different directions a few weeks' journey, either to sell or purchase sheep and goats, to seek for her some coveted treasure, or to

perform a pilgrimage for her sake; all which arduous duties are, for the most part, religiously performed, without strife or jealousy.

THE STORY OF NEEL KHOAR AND HER FIVE HUSBANDS

is related by the *Paharris* (mountaineers) with a hope, perhaps, that it may have a tendency to check all obstreperous conduct, on the part of the husbands, towards the common wife, or revengeful behaviour to one another. It is to this effect.

A woman of great beauty, named Neel Khoar, having sufficient wit to select and retain her husbands with proper discretion and kindness, had already taken unto herself three, when she was courted by two youths, who were considered the handsomest men in the village. One was wealthy, and the other had only his beauty to recommend him. She accepted both, and preferred to the head of her household the youth who had so greatly increased her comforts, by bringing to her all the contents of his treasury. The other, who, even in beauty, could not vie with his rival, was made, for a while, the drudge of the family; but being used to such menial offices, he performed cheerfully all that his mistress imposed upon him, and considered himself fortunate in thus obtaining an occasional smile and token of her approval.

Whether it was the effect of this submissive be-

haviour on the part of the youth, or of other good qualities which the wife found in him, certain it is, that he daily increased in favour with her, and was advanced from his pitiable situation to something more like comfort; and others of the family were made to do his bidding, while his comely person was set off by handsome apparel and ornaments. The secret influence which had gained him this distinction continued to operate with still greater force, until it was evident that the wife had no will but his pleasure, no pleasure but his will, and she hesitated not to heap upon him every possible mark of her affection, without regard to expense, or a thought concerning her other wedded loves.

As would certainly be the case with any other man under such circumstances, the favourite became intolerably conceited, overbearing to his fellow husbands, and solely engrossed by his passion for the all-loving and beloved queen of his heart. In luxury and sloth, the infatuated pair passed the time away, while the other men were made to slave for their support, and the encouragement of their excesses.

Unused to such indulgences, hitherto humble and poor, the new favourite was lost in the intoxication of pleasure, his heart was abandoned to pride and selfishness, while every kindly virtue lay dormant. Yet, when the hours of excitement ceased to flush his senses, and fresh pleasures of dissipation failed to bud, in his heart he could not but feel conscious

of the utter inanity of his fancied happiness, and he lamented, while he had not strength to grapple with, the dark passions which were coiling themselves around his throbbing heart. The momentary presence of such images left clouds of sadness lingering upon that fine brow where hitherto peaceful content alone had rested, and this unwonted gloom, though only occasional, failed not to attract the notice of the wife. Her first smile soon became unable to dispel it, and fearful of evil she sought an explanation of the change, but was quite unable to comprehend the half-confessed reasons alleged by the husband, and taxed him with growing indifference. At first, with tenderness he combatted the idea, but finding his assurances fail of conviction, he at length ceased to reply to her continual enquiries about his melancholy, and from that moment the woman's affection was turned from him.

The favourite soon became aware of his changed position, for the same breath which poured the accent of querulous complaint and unkindness on his ear bore the soft murmur of tenderness to the revived senses of his former rival. The gifts, fond tokens of the woman's love, were one by one resumed and bestowed upon his replaced enemy, who already began to retaliate the indignities which he had suffered while out of power; the especial luxuries of the fallen lord were all appropriated to enhance the love of his hated opponent, and not without contemptuous smiles and

many a bitter jest. The demons of jealousy and revenge grew large within the soul of the abused husband, and vowing in his heart a terrible retribution he retired from the hut.

He sought the hidden retreats of a lonely valley, where casting himself upon the ground he remained for a time in an agony of silent tears; until alas! black rage, entering his soul anew, expelled remorse. Starting to his feet, he cried aloud in frenzied passion, "Aye, thus shall it be—and then, collecting all the spoils, I'll hasten to join my brother in his bloody trade."

In the dead of night, when the whole village lay buried in profound sleep, the enraged cast-off, having oiled his person from head to foot, the better to elude capture, secretly withdrew the screen from the door of the family hut, and having in his hand a knife and a cup containing a powerful vitriol, with cautious stealth he entered the lowly apartment. For a moment he paused over the *charpahi* upon which his victims lay, and then, muttering deep curses between his teeth, he dashed the contents of the cup into the face of his rival, and raising his extended arm he was about to stab Neel Khoar to the heart; when, alarmed by the shrieks of her agonized companion, she started to her feet, and with surprising strength and courage closed upon her assailant, and succeeded in keeping off the knife until the neighbours came to her assistance and rescued her.

The beauty of his rival was for ever destroyed, and finding that his once beloved wife had escaped his villany, his heart relented, and he expressed the fullest contrition for the crime; but Neel Khoar would not forgive him, and entreated her husbands to carry him forth and cast him headlong down the cataract; which possibly they would speedily have executed had they not been withheld by the villagers.

"It must not be," said an aged Sanias (a class of religious devotees); "he shall not die. Did the Sanias of old destroy the elephant when he turned against the life of his protector, or did he not rather re-transform him into a mouse as a more lasting punishment for his treachery?"

Neel Khoar, having listened to the words of this wise devotee, became appeased, and her curiosity being excited, she requested that he would favour her with a recital of the story concerning that ancient Sanias and the elephant, in order that she might be able to judge what sort of punishment she could best award to the culprit. Then the old man, delighting to recount the wisdom and the good deeds of one of his own tribe, seated himself in the midst of them, and thus told

THE FABLE OF THE MOUSE AND THE SANIAS.

"You have all of you heard of the celebrated town and temples of Saniaskotta in Rungpoor. That sacred place derives its name from the hero of

my story, who was a Sanias of high repute, a most holy man, and a powerful worker of miracles.

"Before I proceed with my tale, I shall inform you how it happened that the place was thus named after the Sanias, in order that you may be sensible of his exceeding sanctity. After a life of rigid devotion to his religion, and of the severest penance and pilgrimage, this holy Sanias suddenly withdrew from the world, and none were informed of the time or manner of his departure. Hundreds of years afterwards however, when only the tradition of his holiness remained, it happened that a raja of the place was building new works upon the fort; and while digging the foundation, the workmen were suddenly surprised by a loud outcry from beneath the solid earth; and on looking narrowly at the spot whence they had withdrawn their tools, they found marks of blood, and seeing the earth move, and hearing the voice continue its complaint, they cleared the spot and found that they had wounded the head of a man who was lying in the earth. This proved to be the very Sanias, who hundreds of years before had lived above ground at that place; all the intervening years he had spent in meditation, and still so much was he bent upon the mysteries of his own thoughts, that instead of desiring to see the daylight, he requested the workmen to cover him up again. He was immediately obeyed, and instead of building the new fortifications, the raja ordered the present temples to be erected over the spot, as also

the house of mendicants and other religious buildings, which to this day bear the name of Saniaskotta.

"Now it was during the lifetime of this extraordinary saint that the circumstances of my tale occurred. That reverend man was one morning, soon after sunrise, seated upon the earth under the broad spreading shade of a superb tamarind tree, around the trunk of which he had built his hut; and while he was ruminating upon the fruits of his own wisdom, and preparing spiritual food for his daily disciples, a little mouse, mangled and almost dead, fell before him from the talons of a kite, who, having carried him into the tree, was about to devour him. 'Behold,' cried the good man, 'even the smallest and poorest of God's creatures are worthy of our sympathy and protection; what shall I do to comfort this poor mouse?' Then taking up the miserable little animal, he caressed it, and took so much care of it, that in a few minutes it began to revive; then he gave it rice to eat, and soon restored it to its full strength and sleekness. In gratitude for these fond services, the mouse became exceedingly well attached to the Sanias, and felt that, in return for so much kindness, he was ready at any time to lay down his life for his benefactor; and would on no account depart from him, but continued daily to partake of his rice, and to receive other marks of his favor.

"It happened that, upon one occasion, while the mouse was playing about his patron's cottage, a large

and very ferocious black cat came prowling by, who, perceiving the mouse, was preparing to spring upon and devour that poor little animal. By good fortune, however, the Sanias was seated reading in front of his door, and quickly discovered the jeopardy of his favorite. His heart was immediately enlarged with compassion, and in order to rescue the mouse he in a moment of time transformed him into a cat superior in size and strength to his enemy; so that the black cat becoming terribly alarmed remained not to contemplate this wonderful transfiguration, but fled in the fear of annihilation.

" Exulting in his increased bulk and newly acquired strength, and sensible of the great peril from which the Sanias had rescued him, the cat failed not to exhibit an increased degree of affection towards his protector, and the Sanias in return showed that he regarded the animal with fondness, as a signal mark of his power and skill. Thus when he beheld the cat exposed to danger by the attack of a fierce dog, he hesitated not to repeat his spell, and at once changed him into a larger and more powerful dog than the assailant, and by this means was he a second time delivered by the Sanias from threatening destruction. Not very long after this new instance of the devout man's supernatural power and his benevolence of heart, the dog was attacked by a fierce buffalo, and the Sanias again befriended him, as he had done before, by converting him into a beast of the same genus, but

of more formidable appearance, so that his antagonist again fled in fear of him. And again for the same reason did the Sanias transform the buffalo into a rhinoceros, and the rhinoceros into an elephant.

"Then the elephant became over elated at the extraordinary good fortune which had befallen him, in being changed from so weak and helpless a creature as a mouse into an elephant of incomparable strength, and thus rejoicing in his newly-acquired might, he wandered to and fro, displaying his terrible prowess in various acts of mischief and devastation, until the neighbours, becoming fearful as well as angry, exclaimed, 'Who is this elephant, that he should thus lay waste our gardens and vineyards, and destroy our cattle? Is he not the miserable mouse whose life the Sanias saved again and again, and now his usurped and unnatural strength is turned against his friends? What manner of elephant is he? Truly his ingratitude deserves a severe chastisement: let us destroy him.'

"Then the elephant became greatly distressed. 'Is it thus?' said he within himself. 'Then as long as that Sanias continues to breathe, he will relate the story of my former insignificance, and how I have been exalted to my present might from the pitiable condition of a dying mouse. This ignominy shall no longer cleave to me. The vile Sanias shall die, and with him will perish the history of my altered state.' Having come to this abominable determination, the

ungrateful elephant rushed upon his benefactor, and would have torn him to pieces in an instant; but the holy man, knowing by virtue of his piety and by divine intuition, the evil machinations which had sprung up in the heart of the elephant, by one blighting glance of his eye, paralysed the limbs of that monstrous brute, and then, pronouncing a word or two of *jádoo*, and spirting a few drops of water in his face, he immediately re-transformed him into a mouse; being convinced that the degradation to his former insignificance would prove a much more severe punishment than annihilation could ever be.

"Now, my daughter, follow the example of the wise Sanias; you have been pleased to raise this ingrate from poverty and abject nothingness to the favour of your love and the enjoyment of all which your wealth could bestow upon him. How has he requited your affection? Now make him the laughing-stock of the world, and the mark of his own bitter hatred and contempt, by casting him back upon his original littleness."

Neel Khoar could not but admire the advice of the Sanias, and having ordered the culprit to be stripped of all which he possessed, she had him branded on the cheeks with a mark of infamy, and turned him

adrift upon the wide world. "For," said she, "if a thief in scaling a wall should fall to the ground and have his back broken, does he merit our sympathy or our reproof?"

THE END.

CLARKE, PRINTERS, SILVER STREET, FALCON SQUARE, LONDON.

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 09 March, 2016